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Washington MONTHLY

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January 14 at 6:41 pm via web *

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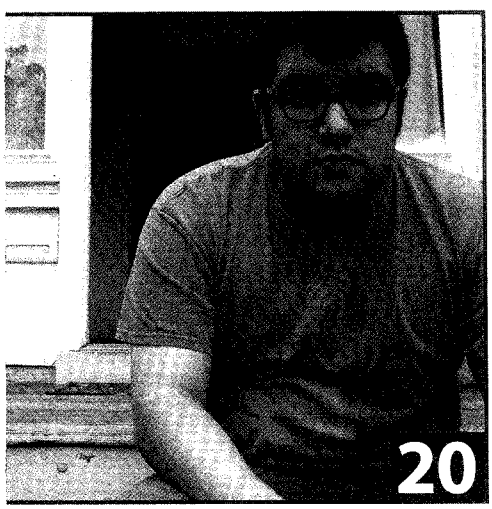

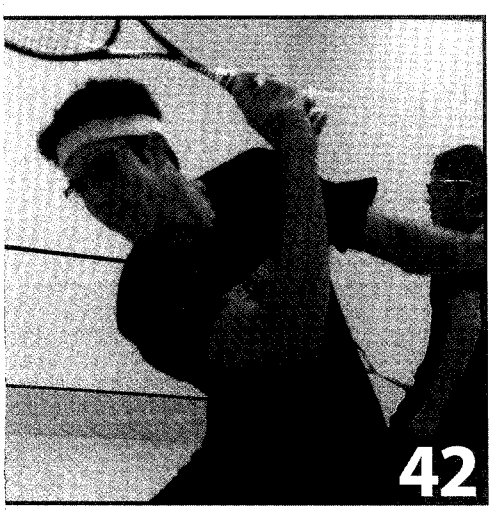

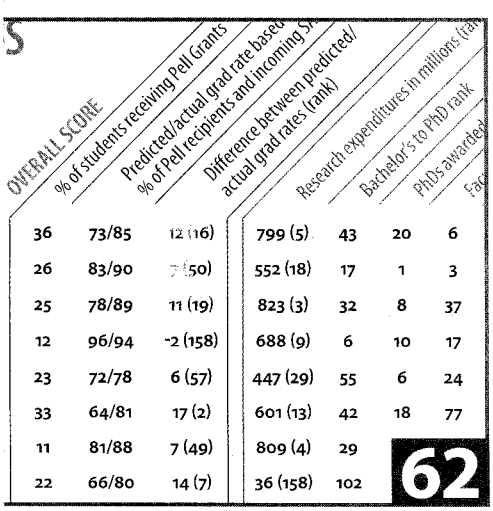

OVERALL SCORE	% of students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SAT	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	PhDs awarded	Fac
36	73/85	12 (16)	799 (5)	43	20	6	
26	83/90	7 (50)	552 (18)	17	1	3	
25	78/89	11 (19)	823 (3)	32	8	37	
12	96/94	-2 (158)	688 (9)	6	10	17	
23	72/78	6 (57)	447 (29)	55	6	24	
33	64/81	17 (2)	601 (13)	42	18	77	
11	81/88	7 (49)	809 (4)	29			
22	66/80	14 (7)	36 (158)	102			

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Editor's Note

PAUL GLASTRIS

Schools for Scandal

It's in the nature of social progress that conditions which today strike us as obviously morally outrageous—that women were not allowed to vote or blacks to be served at restaurants—were once considered the natural order of things. Three decades ago, almost no one thought it unjust that there were no parking spaces reserved for the disabled, or that airline passengers were forced to breathe in other people's cigarette smoke. We are now in the middle of a similar mass awakening to the unfairness of banning gays from marrying and serving openly in the military.

What is the next great injustice that we do not yet recognize as such but soon will? How about the way the higher education system screws millions of lower-income students? In this current issue, our annual College Guide, Benjamin Miller and Phuong Ly take a hard look at the roughly 200 colleges and universities in America with the worst records of graduating their students (page 20). These colleges make up 15 percent of the total and disproportionately serve working-class and minority students. They are akin to the 15 percent of high schools Barack Obama and other would-be reformers have dubbed "dropout factories" for having scandalously low graduation rates—on average about 50 percent. But the average graduation rate at the 200 "college dropout factories" is 26 percent. America's worst colleges, in other words, are twice as bad as its worst high schools.

This is an appalling waste of human talent. The students who go to these colleges are, by and large, strivers. They are the ones who *made it out of the bad high schools*. When they then try to improve their lives by seeking a college degree, they are steered—via relative tuition costs and geographic convenience—toward precisely those institutions where they are most likely to fail. Lest you think the fault lies not with the colleges but with the students' lack of academic preparedness, consider this: enroll those same students in different colleges and their chances of graduating double or even triple.

Most Americans understand that there is something profoundly unjust about poor kids being stuck in failing K–12 schools, and as a nation we've spent decades trying to do something about it—through desegregation, Title I, No Child Left Behind, and so on. But the existence of hundreds of failing colleges isn't seen as a scandal. In fact it isn't seen at all. This blindness is in large part due to attitudes we have about higher education: that it's not for everyone, and that those who pursue it are adults and therefore responsible for their own success or failure. These attitudes aren't altogether wrong, but an unthinking adherence to them has meant giving a free pass to schools that effectively rob students of a chance to earn the college degrees they need to enter the middle class.

Our lack of awareness about what's happening at the worst colleges is also a product of a media that devotes nearly all of its attention to what are traditionally thought of as the "best" schools. This preoccupation is made worse by the *U.S. News* college guide. *U.S. News* ranks schools according to measures, like reputation and SAT scores, that are guaranteed to reinforce the conventional hierarchy. Since 2005, we've offered an alternative ranking based on a very different criterion: how much public value colleges deliver for the billions of taxpayer dollars we give them every year (page 15). Looking at schools this way leads to a quite different hierarchy, with schools like Yale and Princeton eating the dust of places like UC San Diego and South Carolina State.

A media infatuated with prestige misses the larger purpose—and the larger story—of higher education. It allows a place like George Washington University to be seen as elite when, by our lights, the school is just expensive (page 42). And it is unlikely to notice promising new developments, like the year-old University of Minnesota Rochester, an experimental state campus that has set out to offer a flagship quality education at a third the cost (page 27).

This year we also take a look at another class of schools that other guides typically ignore: community colleges (page 47). The fifty best community colleges in our ranking are providing a first-class education at a reasonable cost to minority and working-class students who desperately need a leg up in these tough economic times. That success is further proof that the dropout factories have no excuse for their failure—and that we have no excuse for not being mad as hell about it. WM

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BRIDGE TO NOWHERE

As a subscriber since the 1980s, I've been very appreciative of so many of your articles, but this is my first letter to the editor—to laud "The Shipping News" (July/August 2010). You've convinced me that reforming our transportation industries is a low-lying fruit if we want to address both oil depletion and climate change. I was particularly impressed with the article's clear analysis that trucking is so much more vulnerable to rising oil costs than rail or water.

It seems logical that market forces coupled with government reforms will bring real change. But vested interests are likely to subvert such change. On the Canadian-American border, an enormously expensive effort is underway to double the capacity of the Peace Bridge, deemed necessary because of the international truck traffic that crosses into Buffalo—more than 90 percent going long distances to someplace else. This comprehensive investment of nearly $1 billion can be justified only if one believes that oil prices are going to go down. Yet an international bridge authority with a narrowly defined mission—dangling the lure of construction jobs, a superficial desire for a "signature bridge," and the hapless argument that we've planned "long enough" (despite declining traffic counts for a decade)—is overwhelming the obvious questions.

Henry McCartney
Buffalo, NY

SPEAKING OUT OF SCHOOL

Sarah Garland's report on New York City's "remedy" to the dropout crisis ("Big Gains in the Big Apple," July/August 2010) is accurate but disturbing. Giving potential dropouts the opportunity to finally discover that graduation can be achieved at smaller, 200-student schools is commendable, but at what price? Funds allocated to smaller schools are disproportionate to their numbers, while the larger comprehensive high schools are still expected to maintain a high standard with shrinking budgets.

Claudia Toback
CMT Educational Consulting
Staten Island, NY

Thank you for taking the initiative to do an in-depth report ("Fighting the Dropout Crisis," July/August 2010) on America's high school dropout crisis. Your special report provided a good opportunity to see how the challenges of raising high school graduation rates play out on the ground and in three distinct parts of the country. It is also good to hear that the current administration is taking the lead to acknowledge the problem and talk about this group of struggling students as a priority. I want, however, to point out a few critical points that the report failed to raise.

Yes, improving the quality of education in our high schools is non-negotiable. But for students with adult responsibilities (work, taking care of families, and early parenting, for example), improving graduation rates is also a matter of improving the mix of quality, nontraditional schools that young adults can attend to stay on track to graduation. Since this group of students is a growing population in our schools, it's imperative that we include their needs in any discussions on high school reform.

Second, I was a bit surprised that your report did not cover the work that New York, Portland, and Philadelphia have underway to create educational stability for youth who are often most at risk of leaving high school without a diploma: those involved with the juvenile justice system and those in foster care. For anyone trying to reenroll a student in school after detention or keep a foster youth in the same school after yet another placement, it is typically an uphill battle to navigate the systems and thus a roadblock to educational continuity and success. Each of these school districts has taken great strides to coordinate "on-ramps" with child welfare and juvenile justice systems for students who might be at risk of losing credits, records, and time because of their involvement in these systems.

Finally, I think that leaders in the field who have followed the challenges and successes of the three featured cities might take issue with your conclusion that Portland has "all the advantages, and nothing to show for it." In 2004, the Youth Transition Funders Group coordinated some of the initial funding support to New York, Philadelphia, and Portland to better assess their dropout crises and develop better data to inform plans to tackle the problems. Early on, Portland stood out as one of the few communities that had created a coalition of alternative schools that sought to improve quality and make sure students had a range of options. Today, it stands out for its extensive and groundbreaking research on tracking "early indicators"—those warnings that help schools identify and intervene when a student is most at risk of being on the dropout path.

Taking on education reform is a challenging, long-term strategy. It's too early to judge Portland as a place that "took good ideas and botched their implementation," because it takes time for school districts to find and sustain solutions that work. If anything is unique about Portland in this regard, it is that the community recognized the problems facing its struggling students and stood up to take on the challenge. In short, I think that Portland has offered the field and its students more than the "cautionary tale" discussed in the report.

Lisa D. McGill, PhD
Director, Youth Transition Funders Group
Via e-mail

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TILTING *at windmills*

By Charles Peters

The next best thing is terrible

I say much that is critical of Obama in this column, as I have in other recent columns. I should make clear, however, that I consider him light-years better than George W. Bush or indeed than any Republican candidate on the horizon. Similarly, on the whole, I find a Democratic majority in Congress infinitely preferable to a Republican one. And so are Democratic majorities in state legislatures, the importance of which cannot be overestimated. Next year, these legislatures will be doing the redistricting of congressional districts based on the 2010 census. It's fair to predict that the more seats are made safely Republican, the more Tea Party members we will have in Congress. The Tea Partiers are not all bad people, but they do seem totally disconnected from the real world of responsible problem solving.

To be sure, Illinois would understand

The headline reads "Lincoln Voters Alive, Prosecutor Says." No, it is not a story about surviving members from the 1860 or 1864 electorate. It is a recent article from the *Charleston Gazette*, describing voters of Lincoln County, West Virginia, whose eligibility had been questioned. My home state is unique. Only in West Virginia could it be news that voters are alive.

The Beginning is not the End

Perhaps my most ancient complaint against the Washington press corps is that it has regarded the passage of a bill as the end of the story, with a resulting failure to follow the bill's implementation and to determine how it is being carried out. At long last there seems to be at least some sign of an awakening—first on the health bill, and most recently on Wall Street reform legislation. Stories about the passage of the new laws have made the point that the reforms cannot be fairly judged until the Fed, the SEC, and other agencies actually implement them.

Another heartening sign is the follow-up stories on the health bill that have already appeared. For example, the *New York Times* has reported that where states have failed to establish coverage for the hard to insure, the federal government is stepping in to do the job. And the *Washington Post* has reported that health insurers are already hard at work pressing regulators to interpret the new law in their favor. You will recall that the health care bill requires that at least 80 percent of premium dollars go to medical and not administrative expenses. Among the items that insurers are contending should be treated as medical expenses, writes the *Post*'s David S. Hilzenrath, are the cost of "precertification" departments that "determine whether the insurer should cover treatment that doctors have proposed" and the conducting of "reviews when patients appeal an insurance company's decision to deny coverage."

These expenses are so obviously administrative that Hilzenrath's story should act as an early warning to the media to keep an eye peeled on attempts by the insurance industry to have its way with the health bill. We have already a similar warning about Wall Street reform from Eric Dash and Nelson D. Schwartz of the *New York Times*, whose piece is subtitled "Its Fight Ended, Wall St. Is Already Working Around New Regulations" and a *Times* lead article by Binyamin Appelbaum, "On Finance Bill, Lobbying Shifts to Regulations."

> Our worn-out troops are reason enough to reduce our exposure in Afghanistan. But for those who need more convincing, I offer the hopeless corruption of the Karzai government.

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News you can lose

Unfortunately, even as the case for better coverage of federal agencies becomes more obvious—consider not only the health care and Wall Street examples, but the recent tragedies caused in considerable part by ineptitude at the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the Minerals Management Service—Jodi Enda of *American Journalism Review* reports that coverage of federal agencies is at "an alarming low," because of cutbacks in print journalism and because of the inattention of the networks and cable television news outlets to anything other than "the story of the day out of the White House, the Capitol and the most visible departments, such as Defense, State, Justice and Homeland Security."

Enda notes that the immense Department of Agriculture is not covered at all except by trade publications, which usually have the most modest circulation and equally little concern for the overall public interest, as opposed to the special interests to which they cater.

> We have read a lot recently about the danger of concussions to football players. What about the dangers to soldiers?

While we're at it, how much of a salary cut would work for you?

I have frequently expressed concern that the White House has been as deficient as the media in its lack of curiosity about what's going in the bureaucracies that it oversees. Further confirmation of my fear comes from a recent headline in the *Washington Post*: "White House Orders Agencies to Identify Trimmable Programs." It seems to me that the White House should know by now what these programs are—or at least have acquired enough sophistication about the ways of Washington to know that the agencies themselves are the least likely to concede that any of their functions is less than absolutely essential.

Our strained first (second, and third) line of defense

There are compelling arguments for maintaining a substantial combat force in Afghanistan. But there is one overwhelming reason why we can't continue: our military has been pushed beyond the breaking point. "Army suicides hit a monthly high in June," reports the *Washington Post*. "The number of soldiers forced to leave the Army solely because of a mental disorder has increased by 64% from 2005 to 2009," reports *USA Today*. Army Lt. Col. Rebecca Porter, an Army behavioral health official, tells *USA Today* that research shows "a clear relationship between multiple deployments and increased symptoms of anxiety, depression and PTSD." During World War II, the surgeon general concluded that 200 to 240 days of combat pushed soldiers to the breaking point. Iraq and Afghanistan have already pushed many well beyond that limit.

As we are, alas, almost alone in pointing out, this country has fewer than 100,000 combat soldiers and marines. The total number of service members is of course much higher, but by far the greater number perform support functions, so we deploy the same fellows over and over again to get shot at and have their brains rattled by IEDs. We have read a lot recently about the danger of concussions to football players. What about the dangers to soldiers? Army Sgt. Chad Joiner tells *USA Today*'s Gregg Zoroya that he has been "near seven blasts during three tours of combat."

Still not convinced?

For me, the condition of our troops is reason enough to radically reduce our combat exposure in Afghanistan, but for those who need more convincing, I offer the hopeless corruption of the Karzai government. Just consider two recent headlines: "Karzai Officials Seen Impeding Bribery Probes" (*Washington Post*); "Corruption Suspected in Airlift of Billions in Cash From Kabul" (*Wall Street Journal*). And did you see the walking tour of Kabul that NBC's Richard Engel conducted for MSNBC's Rachel Maddow? Incredibly large mansions for the elite stand along unpaved streets and open sewers and the squalor in which most Afghans live. Engel explains that some of the billions we have given to the Afghan government have gone to build these structures, but most of it is deposited in the banks of Dubai and other safe havens for the funds ripped off by Karzai's cronies.

Sound familiar?

By the way, you've read a lot recently about the Pakistan intelligence agency's ties to the Taliban. You read it here eight years ago.

The Vietnam Parallel, Part 1

The reason we finally had to give up in Vietnam is that there, too, we were allied with a government that was corrupt, inefficient, and unable to inspire the loyalty of its people or its soldiers, even though many of them had no desire to live under the North Vietnamese Communists.

When Obama was deciding to escalate in Afghanistan, Joe Biden urged that he consider the consequences of the corruption of the Karzai government. Similarly, when the Johnson administration took the decision to make the major escalation in Vietnam in July of 1965, several participants in the deliberations mentioned the weakness of the South Vietnamese government. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge concluded, "I don't think we ought to

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take this government seriously." Yet Johnson, supported by all but one of his national security team, made the decision to commit most of the American troops who were to serve and die in Vietnam.

The Vietnam Parallel, Part 2

At the time, the case for escalation in Vietnam seemed just as compelling as has the case for escalation in Afghanistan. Back then, the Communists seemed an even more potent threat than the Taliban or al-Qaeda are today. The fear now is that our enemies might get control of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Then, the Communists already had their own nukes and seemed just as implacable in their hatred of democracy and of the United States. In 1961, they had built the Berlin Wall, and in 1968 they would cruelly crush the democratic awakening in Czechoslovakia. Surrendering South Vietnam to them seemed just as unthinkable as conceding any ground to the Taliban does today.

So my point is not that our choices are easy. It is only that the course we choose must face the facts that our troops are worn out and that the Karzai government is too corrupt and incompetent to win the loyalty of the Afghan people.

The real nuclear buildup

Speaking of matters nuclear, the expansion of the nuclear power industry that many are advocating today seems to make sense—that is, except for one little problem, and that is how to dispose of radioactive waste. It is crystal clear that the state of Nevada doesn't want it. So it's held in places like Wiscasset, Maine, where the now-closed Maine Yankee nuclear plant left behind fifty-four concrete silos, each seventeen feet tall, and each holding 150 tons of radioactive waste. As the *Wall Street Journal*'s Rebecca Smith explains, "quite simply, the government hasn't found a permanent place to put it."

"Breaking point" isn't just a figure of speech

To put a human face on those suicides by our soldiers, the *Washington Post*'s Greg Jaffe, whose reporting from Iraq and Afghanistan has been consistently first-rate, recently told the story of Staff Sgt. Thaddeus S. Montgomery Jr., who endured three years of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan as a Humvee gunner, a sniper, and an infantry squad leader. For much of that period, Montgomery struck his comrades as a fearless and upbeat leader. One of his men described him this way: "Monty was someone I could talk to when things got tough. He brought laughter to the squad and a bright outlook on life."

But those years of combat took their toll. They included "five complex enemy ambushes, three roadside bomb attacks, and a handful of sniper and mortar assaults." Finally, on January 16, 2010, his company came back from a "harrowing patrol in which his fighting position collapsed on him." After this, "Montgomery withdrew from his friends and said he could no longer fight." A few days later, he killed himself.

> The White House is asking federal agencies to identify their most "trimmable" programs, but it should know that these agencies are the least likely to concede that any of their functions is less than essential.

I sure wonder where I'll work after I leave my SEC job of monitoring wealthy businesses like yours

I am delighted to see that Senator Charles Grassley has asked the SEC's inspector general to review that agency's "revolving door" to make sure that "officials are more focused on regulation and enforcement than on getting their next job in the industry they are supposed to oversee." I hope the senator and his colleagues will show similar concern about themselves and their staffs. It is true that legislators are at least somewhat inhibited from selling out by their need to get reelected. The safer their seat, however, the less that inhibition applies. And there is nothing to keep a staff member from giving priority to securing his next job, which is precisely what more and more of them appear to be doing. This corruption of staff is among the greatest scandals to emerge in Washington since I first came here fifty years ago.

The Bhopal Lesson

A caution about BP: it is essential that we not forget, that we hold their feet to the fire on the cleanup, and that we do not let up until those responsible for the disaster are brought to justice. Consider what Union Carbide and the company that later acquired it, Dow Chemical, got away with after the 1984 chemical leak in Bhopal, India, which killed over 3,000 people immediately, and several thousand later.

It has taken more than twenty-five years to bring even a few of the culpable executives to justice. Only this summer, eight were found guilty in a Bhopal court, but they were sentenced to just two years in jail and fined the equivalent of $2,300. Although both Union Carbide and Dow are American companies, with their policies determined by American executives, not one American has been convicted. In civil damages Carbide gave the average victim the grand sum of $550.

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By the way, as Lydia Polgreen and Hari Kumar of the *New York Times* point out, 425 tons of hazardous waste remains at the site, still uncleaned by Carbide or Dow.

Bob Herbert: Not boring

I have to confess that I used to dismiss Bob Herbert as a predictable liberal, but his recent columns about jobs and Afghanistan have struck me as outstanding, both for their passion and their humanity.

Overworked today, overpaid tomorrow

Ever since I suffered at the hands of an exhausted emergency room resident, I have worried about the problem of overworked young doctors. In the years that followed, there have been many proposals for reform. The resulting rules, however, have seemed abysmally weak. In New York, for instance, residents are "limited" to serving eighty-five hours per week. The latest proposal from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education is to limit the shifts worked by first-year doctors to sixteen hours. That's still too much. Not only are these physicians likely to commit medical errors because they are too tired to think straight; I'm also convinced that overworking young physicians breeds a self-pity that convinces them that, later in their careers, they deserve to drive Jaguars, enjoy incomes of several hundred thousand dollars a year, and unwind with a round of golf at their country clubs while the young residents are slaving back at the hospital.

> Not only are medical residents likely to commit errors because they are too tired to think straight; overworking young physicians also breeds a self-pity that convinces them they deserve to drive Jaguars.

What this headline won't tell you

"Avandia Gets Equivocal Vote from FDA Panel. Fewer Than Half Want Diabetes Drug Pulled over Safety Concerns." If this subhead from the *Washington Post* leads you to assume that more than half the panel approved of Avandia, it was significantly misleading. Here's what you would have found if you had stuck it out through the story's fifth paragraph: of the thirty-two members of the FDA panel who voted, only three favored allowing Avandia to continue its present sales practices unaltered. What is more, "10 voted that it should remain available, with serious label revisions and possible restrictions on its sale," seven "voted to add further warnings to the drug's label," and twelve voted to prohibit the drug completely. A lot of us read three or four stories carefully in our daily newspapers but scan the rest of the contents. This means that the writers of headlines have an obligation to take care, especially when a threat to health, like a potentially dangerous drug, is concerned.

Don't look over your shoulder

Looking back to the lessons I learned while doing my book on Lyndon Johnson, one stands out: Democratic presidents can make major mistakes out of fear of Republican criticism. My point is not that the fear was unrealistic—indeed, in each of the examples I cite below, I'm quite sure most Republicans would have acted predictably—but what I want to do is remind Obama and future presidents of the danger of yielding to it.

After John Kennedy saved us from nuclear war in the Cuban missile crisis, he concealed the most dovish action—Bobby's secret offer to Dobryin to remove our missiles from Turkey—from the public and from Lyndon Johnson. His fear of Republican criticism led him to compound this sin, in an interview with Charlie Bartlett and Stewart Alsop, by demeaning Adlai Stevenson for his spinelessness in urging the precise action Kennedy had taken. Both Johnson and the public assumed that we had made the other fellow blink, when in fact both sides blinked.

When the Tonkin Gulf episode occurred, Johnson's first reaction was to dismiss the attack as an understandable North Vietnamese response to South Vietnamese provocation. When, however, he was told he had to appear tough to avoid criticism from Barry Goldwater—the time was early August, during the 1964 presidential campaign—Johnson proceeded to blame the North and get Congress to pass the Tonkin Gulf Resolution.

Throughout the war Johnson was haunted by the fear that the GOP would accuse him of losing China again. Similarly his sending of troops to the Dominican Republic was motivated by a fear that he would be accused of losing Cuba again.

In Obama's case fear of Republican criticism appears to have been one factor in what history may view as four serious errors: the size of the stimulus; the strategy of health care reform and its impact on the content of the bill; the escalation in Afghanistan; and the failure to take immediate control of the response to the oil spill. The most recent and most absurd example of the impact of the fear of Republican criticism was the hasty reaction of the administration, if not of Obama himself, to the apparent misdeeds of Shirley Sherrod. And I must say that I do suspect White House involvement. Lamentably, the one kind of case where a White House is sure to concern itself with what the bureaucracies are doing is when there is a high potential for publicity, positive or negative. WM

Charles Peters, founding editor of the *Washington Monthly*, is the author of *Lyndon B. Johnson*.

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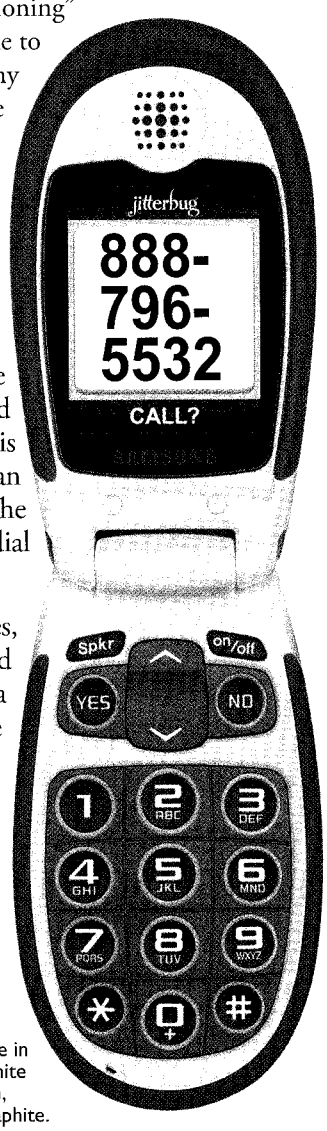

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The cell phone that's right for me. Sometimes I think the people who designed this phone and the rate plans had me in mind. The phone fits easily in my pocket, but it flips open and reaches from my mouth to my ear. The display is large and backlit, so I can actually see who is calling. With a push of a button I can amplify the volume, and if I don't know a number, I can simply push one for a friendly, helpful operator that will look it up and even dial it for me. The Jitterbug also reduces background noise, making the sound loud and clear. There's even a dial tone, so I know the phone is ready to use.

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911 Access	FREE	FREE	FREE
Long Distance Calls	No add'l charge	No add'l charge	No add'l charge
Voice Dial	FREE	FREE	FREE
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Trial Period	30 days	30 days	30 days

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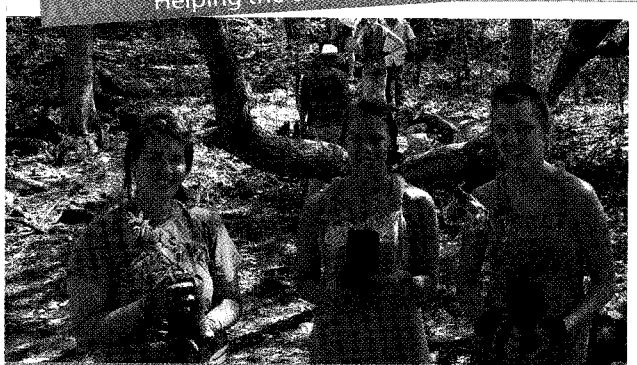
Wartburg College Saluted for Service

Washington Center Award: Working in New Orleans soup kitchen

President's Honor Roll: Assisting flood victims

Break Away recognition: Helping the disabled in Florida



MacJannet Prize: Community building in Nicaragua

Davis Projects for Peace: Fighting malaria in Guyana

"Taking responsibility for our communities and making them better through public action."

1. Wartburg is **No. 1** in percentage of participation among the 150 chapters of **Break Away**, the alternative break connection, with 15.3% of our students going on 24 service projects.

2. For the last four years, Wartburg has been named to the **President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll – twice** "with distinction."

3. **The MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship** bestowed a **third-place** award on Wartburg's Community Builders program – college students, volunteers and schoolchildren working together to strengthen communities from Iowa to Nicaragua.

4. Wartburg has received **four Davis Projects for Peace grants** since 2007 for bore-hole drilling for clean water in Nigeria, fighting malaria in Guyana, removing land mines in Cambodia, and promoting inclusion in Iowa.

5. **The Washington Center** honored Wartburg's innovative Center for Community Engagement with one of its **five** 2009 **Higher Education Civic Engagement Awards**, citing students "living their learning" through community involvement

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INTRODUCTION: A DIFFERENT KIND OF COLLEGE RANKING

By the Editors

It wasn't long ago that the colleges annually anointed as "America's Best" by *U.S. News & World Report*—Harvard, Princeton, and Yale—served as fertile breeding grounds for future masters of the financial universe. History majors from New Haven could make the hour-long drive along the Long Island Sound to the hedge funds of Greenwich, Connecticut. The Harvard-to-Wall-Street pipeline was open full bore.

Then all those smart people destroyed their own companies and almost brought the global economy down with them. The credit markets collapsed, demand for goods and services plummeted, and millions of innocent workers lost their jobs. Today's college graduates face the worst labor market in generations.

As a result, many are looking to do good if they can't do well. Applications to the Peace Corps jumped 18 percent in 2009. The number of students vying for Teach for America slots increased from 18,000 in 2007 to 46,000 this year.

The renewal of a desire to serve is heartening. But the truth is that while jobs that allow you to lose billions of other people's dollars and wreck the economy before you turn thirty have traditionally been limited to graduates of a few select institutions, a steady focus on service has not. Many colleges that fall in the middle of the *U.S. News* pack (or lower) have long been more inclined to spend energy and resources on encouraging students to give back to their communities and their nation, and not just themselves.

Calling attention to these service-oriented schools is one of the reasons this magazine got into the college-ranking business in the first place. When we published our first ranking in 2005 (with the expectation that it would prove a point rather than become a tradition), the idea was to upend the traditional notion of a college guide. Instead of asking what a college could do for you, we asked, "What are colleges doing for the country?" Yes, Yale might educate a disproportionate number of future hedge fund managers. But is it laying the foundation for the kind of nation we want to become?

After all, colleges and universities do as much to shape the future as any institutions you can think of. They conduct cutting-edge research that drives economic growth, provide upward mobility to people of humble birth, and mold the characters of tomorrow's leaders. And they are supported in these endeavors with hundreds of billions of dollars in government subsidies. So we all have a stake in knowing how well schools fulfill their public missions.

But while there are plenty of guides out there that help students and parents decide how to spend their tuition dollars wisely, there wasn't one to tell citizens and policymakers which colleges were spending their tax dollars wisely. So we devised a way to measure and quantify how well individual colleges and universities were meeting their public obligations in the areas of research, service, and social mobility (see "A Note on Methodology," page 86), and we ranked schools based on the results.

For more on our rankings and the latest in higher education reform news, check out our new College Guide Web site, at washingtonmonthly.com

The full rankings for national universities and liberal arts colleges begin on page 62. This year, we've also provided a top fifty ranking for three other categories of schools: master's universities (page 58), baccalaureate colleges (page 60), and community colleges (page 48). And in light of surging student demand for service opportunities, we've enhanced our service measures for 2010. In addition to rating colleges on criteria such as the number of

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TOP 30
NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

		RANK IN *U.S. NEWS* (2010)
1.	**UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA—SAN DIEGO (CA)**	**35**
2.	University of California—Berkeley (CA)	21
3.	Univ. of California—Los Angeles (CA)	24
4.	Stanford University (CA)	4
5.	University of Texas—Austin (TX)	47
6.	University of California—Davis (CA)	42
7.	University of Michigan—Ann Arbor (MI)	27
8.	Syracuse University (NY)	58
9.	Harvard University (MA)	1
10.	College of William and Mary (VA)	33
11.	Univ. of California—Santa Barbara (CA)	42
12.	University of Chicago (IL)	8
13.	U. of North Carolina—Chapel Hill (NC)	28
14.	South Carolina State University (SC)	3rd tier
15.	Massachusetts Inst. of Technology (MA)	4
16.	University of Washington (WA)	42
17.	Case Western Reserve Univ. (OH)	41
18.	Rutgers, St. U. of N.J.—Newark (NJ)	3rd tier
19.	Georgetown University (DC)	23
20.	Texas A&M U.—Col. Station (TX)	61
21.	Dartmouth College (NH)	11
22.	Johns Hopkins University (MD)	14
23.	Univ. of Wisconsin—Madison (WI)	39
24.	Princeton University (NJ)	1
25.	Rice University (TX)	17
26.	SUNY Col. of Envir. Sci. & For. (NY)	80
27.	U. of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign (IL)	39
28.	Tennessee State University (TN)	4th tier
29.	Duke University (NC)	10
30.	University of Rochester (NY)	35

students participating in ROTC and the Peace Corps, we factor in five new measures, including how many students engage in community service and whether a college provides matching dollars for service-oriented scholarships like AmeriCorps.

The result is a very different perspective on higher education excellence than the one represented by *U.S. News*. While a few universities like Stanford do well on both rankings, many at or near the top of the *U.S. News* list, like Princeton and Yale, fare poorly by our count. At the same time, many colleges that are routinely buried in the lower reaches of the *U.S. News* rankings stand out on our list.

Here are some of the biggest standouts and surprises from this year's *Washington Monthly* college rankings:

The Public Option

The *U.S. News* rankings are exclusionary by design: you get ahead based on the number of students you don't admit. Since private schools are the most selective, it's not surprising that the top twenty national universities on the *U.S. News* list are all private. Public institutions that serve a diverse population of students fare much better by our measures. Thirteen of our twenty highest-ranked universities are taxpayer supported, including the top-ranked University of California, San Diego. While some publics, like the University of Michigan and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, have selective admissions, others like South Carolina State and the Newark campus of Rutgers University serve students of all kinds. Both of the latter topped well-known private universities including the University of Pennsylvania (at number thirty-four), NYU (number forty-seven), and Notre Dame (number fifty-seven).

The University of California stands out—five of our top eleven universities are part of the UC system, with San Diego joined by the campuses at Berkeley, Los Angeles, Davis, and Santa Barbara. Unfortunately, feckless voters and incompetent politicians have spent the last several decades running California into a financial ditch. When the recent recession arrived, higher education took a mighty hit, forcing the university to furlough staff and impose an astonishing 32 percent tuition hike. It's terrible to watch a wealthy state like California dismantle one of the world's great university systems. We hope they fix matters before UC schools begin to slide down in our rankings.

Status Anxiety

A few colleges have cannily played the status game over the years and climbed into the company of the Ivies and other well-known schools. But it has come at a cost to their public mission. (See Daniel Luzer, "The Prestige Racket," page 42.) Washington University in St. Louis is number twelve according to *U.S. News* but appears twenty-four spots lower on our list, in part because only 5 percent of its undergraduates qualify for Pell Grants. Northeastern University in Boston, another up-and-comer, which places eightieth on *U.S. News*, is number 172 on our list because it enrolls few low-income students and has a lower graduation rate than it should. Washington, D.C.–area institutions like American University, George Washington, and the University of Virginia all do poorly on our rankings because they have Pell Grant rates of 10 percent or less. Everyone pays for these institutions through tax subsidies and federal grants. But for the most part, only the well-off need apply.

Back in Black

Many of our best liberal arts colleges were founded with a specific mission in mind. Morehouse College, an all-male historically black college in Atlanta, takes over the num-

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ber one ranking this year. Morehouse enrolls an unusually large number of low-income men, graduates most of them, makes significant contributions to research, and has an active ROTC program. Dillard University and Fisk University, also historically black institutions, both make our top thirty. *U.S. News* relegates them to the "third tier," largely as a consequence of the fact that they serve an academically and economically diverse group of students. We rank them near the top for the same reason.

Historically black Spelman, meanwhile, is our eighth-best liberal arts college. It's also all female, a trait that a number of other highly ranked colleges share. Bryn Mawr is number two this year, and Wellesley is number ten, with Smith not far behind. Most historic women's colleges have long since become coeducational. Those that remain are distinguishing themselves in putting women on the path to opportunity.

Lives Well Led

Colleges should be judged not just on who they enroll and how many graduate but on what students do with their lives after they leave. The College of William and Mary is ranked tenth among national universities because an unusually large number of graduates go on to earn PhDs or join the Peace Corps. Reed College in Oregon checks in at number thirteen on the liberal arts college list for the same reason. Wellesley and Smith are both in the top five in sending alumnae on to doctoral degrees.

On the other end of spectrum we find the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Despite being classified by the nonprofit Carnegie Foundation as a research university, only eleven of its graduates earn PhDs in an average year. That's one-sixth as many as Wellesley produces, despite the fact that Fairbanks enrolls three times as many students. Fairbanks also enrolls an abnormally small number of low-income students and has a catastrophic 23 percent graduation rate. (See Ben Miller and Phuong Ly, "College Dropout Factories," for more on the hidden college graduation rate crisis, page 20.) Perhaps the mama grizzlies in Alaska need to do a better job of minding their cubs.

Look Who Serves

Our newly improved service rankings highlight institutions that are usually far from the national spotlight. Virginia's Emory & Henry College is one of them. The front page of its Web site trumpets the college's 2009 designation as one of only six institutions, out of 780 applicants, to receive the President's Award for Higher Education Community Service. Would that more colleges marketed themselves this way.

But well-known institutions can do well, too. Stanford is unusually service focused, one reason it's our highest-ranked private university. The University of Texas at Austin, our fifth-ranked university, is world-renowned for its archives, museum, and Division I football team. But it also spends 31 percent of federal work-study dollars on service, far more than most. Austin is number three nationwide in the percent of students who participate in service programs and the total number of hours they devote.

Not all elite universities are so generous. Yale, Brown, and Duke all rank near the bottom in spending federal work-study funds on service, each below 8 percent. It's dubious that wealthy private universities like these receive work-study funds at all, given their vast endowments. It's worse that they give back so little to their local communities.

The Joy of Rankings

Many colleges reject rankings out of hand, insisting that education is too ineffable for metrics. We disagree. Students

TOP 30 LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

		RANK IN *U.S. NEWS* (2010)
1.	MOREHOUSE COLLEGE (GA)	3RD TIER
2.	Bryn Mawr College (PA)	25
3.	Swarthmore College (PA)	3
4.	Berea College (KY)	3rd tier
5.	Amherst College (MA)	2
6.	Harvey Mudd College (CA)	14
7.	Williams College (MA)	1
8.	Spelman College (GA)	68
9.	Wesleyan University (CT)	13
10.	Wellesley College (MA)	4
11.	Bowdoin College (ME)	6
12.	Carleton College (MN)	8
13.	Reed College (OR)	49
14.	Tougaloo College (MS)	3rd tier
15.	College of the Holy Cross (MA)	36
16.	Whitman College (WA)	36
17.	Occidental College (CA)	33
18.	Davidson College (NC)	8
19.	Bates College (ME)	25
20.	Smith College (MA)	18
21.	Emory and Henry College (VA)	3rd tier
22.	Macalester College (MN)	29
23.	Wofford College (SC)	62
24.	Pomona College (CA)	6
25.	Centre College (KY)	46
26.	Oberlin College (OH)	22
27.	Dillard University (LA)	3rd tier
28.	Rhodes College (TN)	54
29.	Fisk University (TN)	3rd tier
30.	New College of Florida (FL)	97

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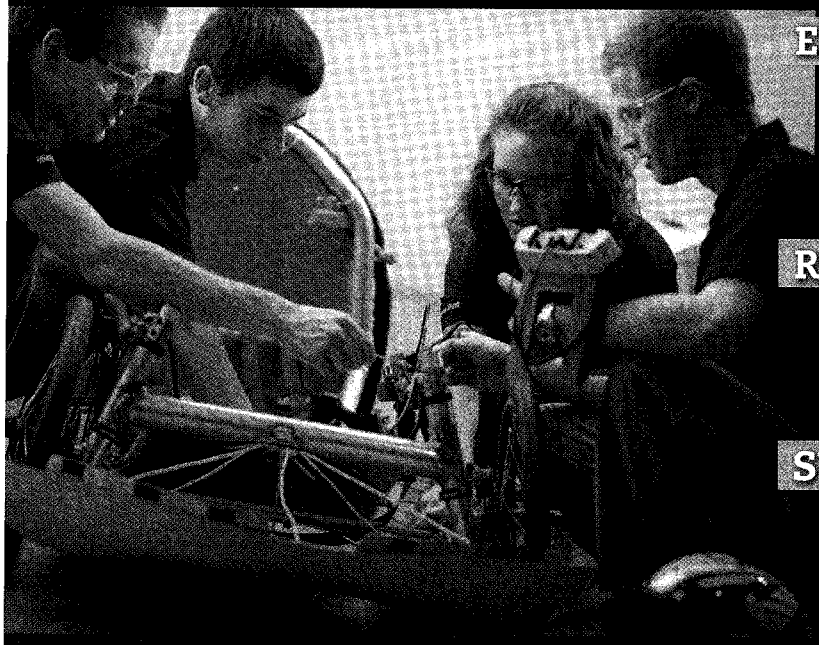
and parents need clear, comparable measures in order to make smart choices, particularly given how expensive college has become. Colleges that don't want to be compared to their peers are just trying to avoid public scrutiny. While colleges do have a point when they complain about *U.S. News*'s ratings, the problem isn't that *U.S. News* ranks colleges, but that it does so based on the wrong factors—like wealth, fame, and selectivity—that incentivize college administrators in the wrong ways. A college president vying for rankings glory on our list, by contrast, would have to enroll more low-income students, help them earn degrees, orient academic programs toward service, and invest in new scientific research. The country needs more of that kind of competition, not less.

Rankings are only as good as the data on which they're based. We've long noted the potential to use college-level information from the National Survey of Student Engagement, a comprehensive survey of best educational practices that was originally envisioned as a counterweight to *U.S. News*. The problem is that most colleges won't allow NSSE to release their results to the public. (Community colleges are not so reluctant, and have made their own similar student engagement survey data available for the world to see.) To their credit, a number of four-year public universities have banded together to voluntarily release selected NSSE results on a Web site called College Portraits (www.collegeportraits.org). There, some also publish data from the well-regarded Collegiate Learning Assessment, a test of higher-order thinking and communications skills, and graduation rates that offer more detail than standard federal measures. Meanwhile, Congress has poured hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years into state-level information systems that will eventually yield data about how college graduates fare in the job market and graduate education.

Overall, however, colleges are still highly skittish about rankings. Prospective students can't use College Portraits to compare data from different schools, for instance. In fact, the site's official slogan is "*No rankings, no spin ... just the facts!*" But rankings aren't "spin." Spin is what colleges do when they mail out glossy brochures that put themselves in the best possible light. Rankings, at their best, are the antidote to spin. Rankings are just the facts presented in the most logical and useful manner possible, facts that serve the broad interests of society instead of the narrow concerns of colleges themselves.

Thanks to the economic crisis, a lot of colleges are in dire financial straights these days. But the right kind of rankings could be a boon to many of these schools. The best thing about showing what you do for the country is that it gives the country more reasons to do something for you in return. The nation is badly in need of cutting-edge research, wise and knowledgeable citizens and workers, and a renewed focus on service. Our top-ranked colleges are poised to deliver. WM

Michigan Technological University



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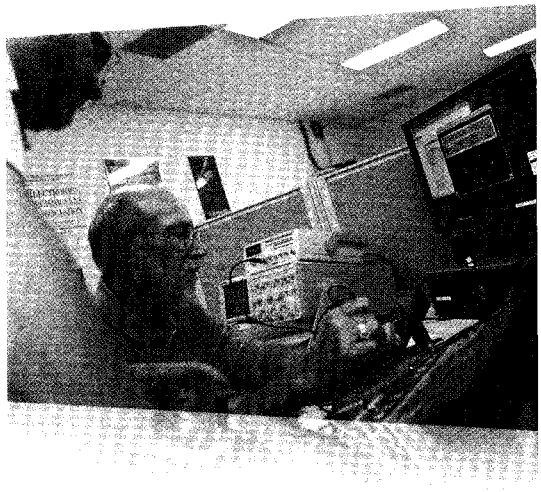

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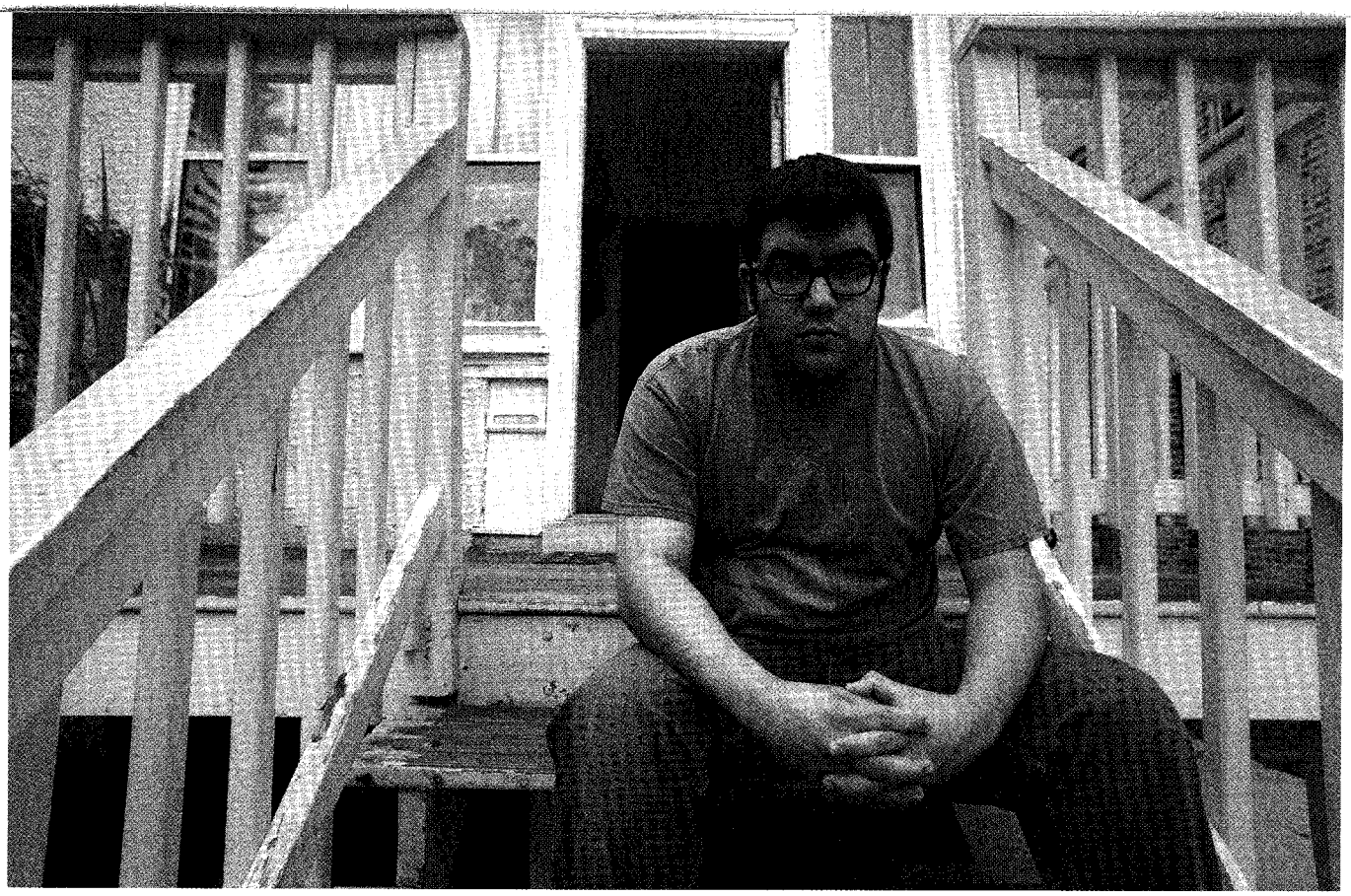

In the front door, out the back: Nestor Curiel spent two years attending Chicago State University, a school with one of the nation's worst dropout rates.

Ryan Bakerink

COLLEGE DROPOUT FACTORIES

The American higher education system shunts striving low-income students into a class of schools invisible to the elite. The only thing these schools do well is drive their students to quit.

By Ben Miller and Phuong Ly

It was money—or the lack of it—that determined where Nestor Curiel chose to go to college. The third of six children in an immigrant Mexican family, Nestor grew up in Blue Island, a gritty working-class suburb near Chicago's South Side. His father worked, and still works, two jobs—machine operator and restaurant dishwasher—and his mother makes and sells crocheted gifts. Nestor, a polite twenty-one-year-old with black-rimmed glasses, graduated from Eisenhower High School with a 3.6 GPA and dreams of becoming an engineer. (As a child he was inspired by Discovery Channel documentaries about engineering marvels, and he also enjoyed helping his dad repair automobiles on weekends.) He particularly wanted to help his parents pay off the mortgage on their weathered gray house, which is two doors down from a corner store with a large "WE ACCEPT WIC" sign in the window.

Nestor was an above-average high school student who generally made the honors list, and he was diligent in his non-school hours as well, holding down a part-time job as a busboy and line

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cook at the restaurant where his father worked. His ACT score was 18, equivalent to about 870 on the SAT, which wasn't high enough to gain him admission to a selective college. (This was typical for his school—41 percent Hispanic, 38 percent black—where only 31 percent of kids meet or exceed standards on state tests, versus 76 percent for the state.) And, apart from a career fair, Eisenhower High School didn't provide much in the way of college guidance. One time, a guest speaker had urged students to expand their horizons and apply to schools out of state, but Nestor worried about going somewhere unfamiliar. Also, if he could live at home, he would save money.

Ultimately, Nestor wound up narrowing his choices down to two nearby schools: Purdue University Calumet and Chicago State University. Each seemed to have advantages and disadvantages, but Chicago State offered one extra perk: $1,000 in scholarship money if Nestor enrolled in its pre-engineering program. That sealed the deal. The stipend, combined with federal and state grants and a private scholarship from Chicago's George M. Pullman Educational Foundation, meant that Nestor could get a college education with most of his expenses paid.

With its tree-lined campus and gleaming new steel and glass convocation center, Chicago State certainly looked impressive. But within his first month there, Nestor wanted to leave. Advisers in the engineering department seemed clueless about guiding him to the right courses, insisting that if he wanted to take programming he first needed to enroll in a computer class that showed students how to turn on a monitor and operate a mouse. (Nestor required no such training.) The library boasted a robot that retrieved books, but Nestor would have preferred that it simply stay open past eight p.m., since class sometimes ended at nine p.m. or later, leaving him without a useful place to study or do research before going home. Trash littered the classrooms and grounds, and during class many of the students would simply carry on conversations among themselves and ignore the instructors—or even talk back to them. Nestor was appalled. "It was like high school, but I was paying for it," he says.

Several students he knew dropped out, but Nestor stayed. "I wasn't going to give them my money and let them kick me out," he says. For the next two years, Nestor encountered a ceaseless array of impediments to getting through school. When he wanted to get a tutor, his advisers couldn't offer any advice about who might be available. When he visited the financial aid office to clear up what seemed like a simple clerical error depriving him of a state grant, the office told him—untruthfully, as it turned out—that getting such grant money would disqualify him from getting any scholarship money from the Pullman Foundation. (By the time the situation was straightened out, the first semester of his sophomore year was nearly over, and the financial office gave Nestor only $780 of what was supposed to be a $1,200 grant, telling him that it couldn't give him money for a semester that was ending. "It kind of felt like they were stealing from me," he says.) Only with the help of two dedicated instructors—Shuming Zheng, an engineering professor, and Thomas Kuhn, a physics lecturer—was Nestor able to finish his pre-engineering credits as planned. Fortunately, this allowed him to transfer to a superior school, the University of Illinois at Chicago, with a $5,000 scholarship.

UIC, adjacent to the city's downtown, is just fifteen miles north of Chicago State, but felt like a world away. Nestor marveled over the smoothness of the operation. At Chicago State, he had been forced to work hard to find help. At UIC, on the first day of each of his classes, professors provided lists of tutors. Chicago State had offered no meaningful job assistance. At UIC, the engineering department was sending out regular e-mails about internships and other opportunities.

Nestor is certain that the two years at Chicago State put him behind. In his first semester at UIC, he failed a math class, finding it difficult to match the faster pace and heavier workload. (He retook the class, however, and passed.) It'll take him five years, rather than four, to get his degree. But he says he feels invigorated by the challenges. "It's hard, but it feels like everybody's trying to help you," he says. "You didn't get that sense at Chicago State."

As it happens, Nestor's impressions are supported by hard numbers. Chicago State has the worst graduation rate of any public four-year university in Illinois and one of the worst in the nation, with just 13 percent of students finishing in six years. For stronger students like Nestor, the statistics are only somewhat better than that. According to a study from the Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR), which looked at twenty different colleges in the Chicago area, kids who graduate from a Chicago public high school with a grade point average of 3.5 have a 37 percent chance of graduating from Chicago State. Those with the same grades who attend UIC have a much better chance of graduating—56 percent. And for those with a 3.5 GPA who attend Northwestern, just north in Evanston, the completion rate is 89 percent. Even schools all around the country with student profiles as challenging as that of Chicago State—that is, schools with mostly African American and Latino students from low-income backgrounds—have overall graduation rates that are many times higher.

Chicago State has the worst graduation rate of any public four-year university in Illinois and one of the worst in the nation, with just 13 percent of students finishing in six years.

Nestor's experience of educational incompetence at the college level isn't just a Chicago phenomenon. Nationwide, low-income minority students are disproportionately steered toward colleges not where they're most likely to succeed, but where they're most likely to fail.

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WORST 50
COLLEGE DROPOUT FACTORIES

		GRAD RATE (%)
1.	SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AT NEW ORLEANS (LA)*	4.98
2.	Concordia College at Moorhead (MN)	5.23
3.	Allen University (SC)	6.09
4.	Martin University (IN)	6.67
5.	Bellevue University (NE)	6.99
6.	Calumet College of Saint Joseph (IN)	7.14
7.	Baker College of Auburn Hills (MI)	7.14
8.	Visible School—Music and Worships Arts College (TN)	7.50
9.	University of the District of Columbia (DC)*	7.94
10.	Saint Augustine's College (NC)	8.24
11.	Nyack College (NY)	8.47
12.	East-West University (IL)	8.79
13.	Haskell Indian Nations University (KS)*	8.90
14.	Crichton College (TN)+	9.09
15.	Jarvis Christian College (TX)	9.57
16.	Edward Waters College (FL)	10.69
17.	Oglala Lakota College (SD)*	11.36
18.	Baker College of Clinton Township (MI)	11.59
19.	Heritage University (WA)	11.67
20.	Davenport University (MI)	11.95
21.	Texas College (TX)	12.20
22.	Texas Southern University (TX)*	12.75
23.	Chicago State University (IL)*	12.79
24.	Purdue University—North Central Campus (IN)*	13.04
25.	Macon State College (GA)*	13.16
26.	West Virginia University at Parkersburg (WV)*	13.16
27.	Mountain State University (WV)	13.30
28.	Saint Paul's College (VA)	13.33
29.	Nevada State College (NV)*	13.33
30.	University of Houston—Downtown (TX)*	13.59
31.	Louisiana State University—Shreveport (LA)*	14.66
32.	Utah Valley University (UT)*	14.82
33.	University of Alaska Southeast (AK)*	15.19
34.	Boricua College (NY)	15.45
35.	University of Great Falls (MT)	15.63
36.	Bryn Athyn College of the New Church (PA)	15.63
37.	Coppin State University (MD)*	15.92
38.	Paul Quinn College (TX)	16.00
39.	Idaho State University (ID)*	16.36
40.	Holy Names University (CA)	16.67
41.	Huston-Tillotson University (TX)	16.81
42.	University of Texas at Brownsville (TX)*	17.26
43.	Bacone College (OK)	17.28
44.	Marygrove College (MI)	17.39
45.	Rogers State University (OK)*	17.54
46.	Long Island University—Brooklyn Campus (NY)	17.63
47.	Miles College (AL)	17.65
48.	Western New Mexico University (NM)*	17.67
49.	Sul Ross State University (TX)*	17.78
50.	Northeastern Illinois University (IL)*	18.32

** Public university; + Chrichton College was purchased by a private company in December 2009 and is now Victory University, a for-profit institution.*

School reformers, including President Obama, often talk about high school "dropout factories." These are the roughly 2,000 public high schools, about 15 percent of the total, with the nation's highest dropout rates. The average student at these schools has about a fifty-fifty chance of graduating, according to the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University. But the term "dropout factory" is also applicable to colleges. The *Washington Monthly* and Education Sector, an independent think tank, looked at the 15 percent of colleges and universities with the worst graduation records—about 200 schools in all—and found that the graduation rate at these schools is 26 percent. (See the table at left for a listing of the fifty colleges and universities with the worst graduation rates.) America's "college dropout factories," in other words, are twice as bad at graduating their students as the worst high schools are at graduating theirs.

Nearly everyone considers it scandalous when poor kids are shunted into lousy high schools with low graduation rates, and we have no problem naming and shaming those schools. Bad primary and secondary schools are frequently the subject of front-page newspaper investigations and the backdrop for speeches by reformist mayors and school district chiefs. But bad colleges are spared such scrutiny. This indifference is inexcusable now that a postsecondary credential has become virtually indispensable to anyone hoping to lead a middle-class life. If we want better outcomes in higher education, we need to hold dropout factories like Chicago State accountable in the same way the Obama administration proposes to hold underperforming high schools accountable: transform them—or shut them down.

When one examines the schools on the list of college dropout factories—the worst being Southern University at New Orleans, with a 5 percent graduation rate—one thing that stands out is their diversity. Geographically, they are all over the map. From New York to Florida to Alaska—few regions of the United States are spared a local dropout factory. Some, like Chicago State, the University of the District of Columbia, and Houston's Texas Southern University, are located in big cities; others, like Sul Ross State University and Heritage University, are in small towns and rural areas. Nor is there a bias toward public or private institutions: it's split fairly evenly, although the public colleges, which are generally bigger, tend to account for greater numbers of dropouts. Some are heavily weighted toward certain minority groups—historically black colleges, for instance, and tribal colleges. Others, like Idaho State, are 80 percent white and do just as poorly. Some of the schools are religious—like Jarvis Christian College, with a 90 percent attrition rate. Most are just seemingly ordinary schools that mostly fly beneath the radar of the national press.

But there are also similarities. As a percentage of their student bodies, these college dropout factories enroll twice as many part-time students, nearly twice as many from low-income families, and around 50 percent more blacks and Hispanics than the average American college or university. They mainly serve local communities, admit most of their applicants, and have much less money than colleges that are higher in prestige. Most upper-

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middle-class parents would never send their kids to these schools—nor have they generally even heard of them. Not surprisingly, the worst of the dropout factories are allowed to roll along in dysfunction, year after year.

The school that would later become Chicago State was founded in September 1867 and called the Cook County Normal School—"Normal" referring to schools that prepare teachers for the classroom. For a century or so, it fulfilled this teacher-training role reasonably well. But in 1965 the school was acquired by the state of Illinois, soon renamed Chicago State, and converted into a standard four-year institution. In 1972, Chicago State moved to a newly built $95 million campus that could accommodate an additional 10,000 students. Most of them would be drawn from the city's poor and working-class South Side and nearby suburbs. It was an admirable attempt to open new doors to a demographic that had been largely shut out of higher education. But it wasn't long before signs of neglect and mismanagement were obvious. Passage rates on an elementary education teacher licensure exam, for instance, plummeted from 82 percent in 1968 to 42 percent in 1973, and the school almost lost its teacher accreditation.

One year later, in 1974, a devastating series on Chicago State appeared in the *Chicago Defender*, the city's premier black newspaper. Under the heading "Why Johnny's Teacher Can't Read," the articles blasted the school, calling it a "diploma mill, with little quality control or concern about the product," and noted "oppressively low" morale among students. Chicago State is a "ripoff institution," it said, "a place where a comfortable white administration and faculty is providing a second-rate education for black students."

Benjamin Alexander, the university's first black president, arrived as a reformer in the 1970s. He made some significant improvements, but the progress largely evaporated after he left in the 1980s. Another reformer came in the 1990s and then was likewise gone. This would become a familiar pattern: temporary reform followed by familiar fecklessness. No improvements ever seemed to stick. In 2008, Chicago State's President Elnora Daniel resigned under pressure after the school suffered yet another severe bout of mismanagement. A state audit found that even as the university suffered budget cuts, Daniel and other employees had spent lavishly on meals, alcohol, and first-class airfare. Daniel had brought five relatives and a university administrator with her on a nine-day Caribbean cruise for a "leadership conference." Lax financial oversight allegedly resulted in the university paying more than a quarter of a million dollars for two photocopiers purchased from a company owned by a university employee.

Meanwhile, students contended with broken elevators, dirty classrooms, and ill-equipped labs. As enrollment declined, so did graduation rates. Of the first-time, full-time freshmen who started in 1996, about 18 percent graduated within six years. The graduation rate dropped to 13 percent in 2008.

Last year, the school's board of trustees picked a new president, Wayne Watson, who has vowed to boost the school's graduation rate through such reforms as a new electronic "early alert" system to track student attendance and class performance. But he cautions against expecting too much from Chicago State, given the kind of students that go there. "I serve a lower economic quartile," he says. "So they're going to drop out because their baby's sick, because they don't have money, because they're trying to survive."

Certainly, Chicago State enrolls a large share of academically underprepared students compared to more selective schools such as UIC or Northwestern, so its graduation rate might be expected to be lower. But the idea that Chicago State is doing the best it can with the kind of students it serves is belied by ample countervailing evidence. As the chart below shows, there are more than half a dozen schools in the United States with student bodies that are remarkably similar to that of Chicago State in every important respect—from race to test scores to family income—

HOW CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY COMPARES TO COLLEGES WITH NEARLY IDENTICAL DEMOGRAPHICS

	Enrollment	% Black and Hispanic	% receiving Pell Grants	Average high school GPA	Average SAT	Six-year graduation rate
Albany State University (GA)	3,752	93.2%	66.8%	2.81	880	50.2%
North Carolina Central University (NC)	5,978	87.0%	63.6%	2.85	845	47.9%
Clark Atlanta University (GA)	3,380	89.0%	65.9%	3.02	880	44.5%
Jackson State University (MS)	6,551	95.9%	64.7%	2.88	870	42.5%
Virginia State University (VA)	4,489	94.1%	58.5%	2.90	840	39.3%
Winston-Salem State University (NC)	5,975	83.7%	55.1%	3.01	865	39.3%
Alcorn State University (MS)	2,626	92.9%	66.6%	2.76	850	38.8%
Savannah State University (GA)	3,337	96.0%	64.8%	2.74	865	34.5%
Chicago State University (IL)	5,211	92.3%	66.7%	2.83	850	12.8%

Source: U.S. Department of Education; Peterson's College Search; College Board.

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but whose graduation rates are at least double, and in some cases more than triple, the graduation rate of Chicago State.

Take North Carolina Central University, which enrolls 8,500 students. About 85 percent of students at both schools are black. NCCU's median SAT score is 840, the approximate equivalent of about 17 on the ACT, even lower than Chicago State's average ACT of 18. The difference, however, is that NCCU tries to work with the students it has. The result: while Chicago State graduates about 13 percent of its students, NCCU graduates about 50 percent. "We have the philosophy that if we admit the students into this institution we have a great responsibility in ensuring their success," says Bernice Duffy Johnson, dean of the school's University College, which focuses on supporting students during their first two years.

Students entering NCCU are told from the start that they are expected to have a goal of graduating in four years. The University College keeps students together in groups and assigns them advisers who must approve all major academic decisions and meet with students frequently. NCCU students even sign a contract upon arriving, a document that lays out the goals of what they are going to accomplish. If they start to struggle, they sign an additional contract that commits them to even closer monitoring. Above all, what drives places like NCCU is a culture of experimentation and data collection. The administrators track students, and they track results. If something works, they keep doing it. If it doesn't, they try something else.

If we want better outcomes in higher education, we need to hold dropout factories like Chicago State accountable in the same way the Obama administration proposes to hold underperforming high schools accountable: transform them—or shut them down.

Other schools similar to Chicago State in their profiles are likewise similar in their pursuit of improved student outcomes. Jackson State University in Mississippi—95 percent black, 65 percent Pell Grant, 43 percent graduation rate—divides incoming students into small groups based on their expected majors and has a required first-year course to help ease the college transition. Faculty can immediately identify struggling students through an online tracking system. The university contracts for extra tutoring in addition to what's already available on campus. It also gathers as much data about students as it can find, using surveys of student engagement and an exam developed by the University of Missouri that tests students before and after their general education courses. "If you don't put in place strategies and interventions to retain the students throughout the four, five, six years of matriculation then you are not meeting the mandate that has been set, and that is to graduate a larger number of students," says Evelyn J. Leggette, Jackson State's dean of undergraduate studies.

Such examples suggest that the stratospheric rates of failure in college dropout factories are hardly inevitable and that blaming the students has become the last refuge of the bungler. As Melissa Roderick, lead author of the Consortium on Chicago School Research report, asks, "How could a child who gets a 4.0 in an urban school system and has high performance in an urban school system and has managed our environment and overcome their poverty, overcome their race, suddenly become a different person in three months who can no longer perform?"

It's important to note that most students who drop out of college don't *fail* out of college. They leave because they don't perceive that the educational benefit of college exceeds the substantial expense of time and money—especially not when it's coupled with indifferent bureaucracies that pride themselves more on inane complexities than actually helping students. But when students are given high expectations and good teaching to match, they succeed academically. And when they succeed they're more likely to keep succeeding and eventually earn a degree.

The worst colleges also tend to plead ignorance as to how to get better. But the strategies employed by colleges that successfully graduate at-risk students aren't particularly groundbreaking. Researchers have been documenting effective methods of preventing dropouts for decades. Most are commonsensical: pay attention to students, and give them the support they need. When Chicago State couldn't give Nestor advice about tutors, it wasn't failing to use "best practices." It was failing to be minimally competent. Nor do college presidents need research to tell them it's a bad idea to squander student tuition dollars on cruises and booze.

Why, then, has the nation tolerated this kind of catastrophic failure, one that has destroyed the college dreams of millions of disadvantaged students, for so long? The answer begins with the fact that most of us don't know there's a problem. The world is run by college graduates, most of whom are products of the middle class. They didn't attend dropout factories, nor are they likely to know anyone who did. People naturally generalize from their own experience, and most public leaders simply have no idea that so many college students fail where they succeeded.

Another reason why we have accepted extremely high dropout rates at some colleges—and, frankly, unimpressive graduation rates throughout much of higher education—is that we lack a broadly shared sense of what an acceptable graduation rate would be. Pretty much everyone agrees that all children need a high school diploma. That's why high school dropout factories are

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condemned without question. College, by contrast, isn't for everyone. So it's easy to see college dropouts as people who didn't get what they probably didn't deserve.

But while some people don't, in fact, need college, most do. Forty years ago, the majority of high school graduates went no further with their education. Today, three-quarters of high school graduates go after a college degree, because they know that a career with a middle-class wage almost always requires one.

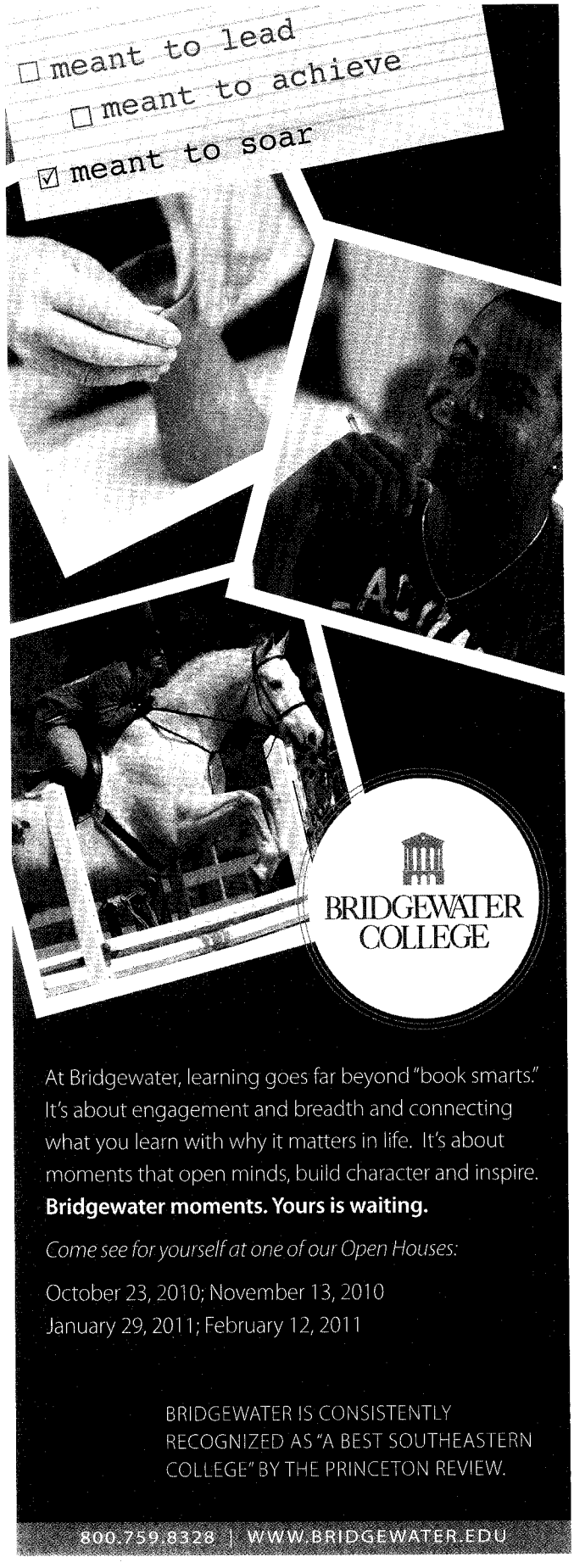
Similarly, just as some people shouldn't go to college, some people who go shouldn't graduate. Colleges have an obligation to maintain academic standards, and the slothful are rightly denied degrees. But there is a huge difference between "not everyone graduates" and "hardly anyone graduates"—the latter being the norm at schools like Chicago State. Of the millions of new students who stream into colleges as freshmen every year, barely half will graduate on time. Many won't graduate at all. According to the census, nearly 34 million Americans over the age of twenty-five list their highest level of education as "some college, no degree." And there is little or no evidence that they fell short because colleges are rigidly enforcing standards. Quite the opposite: the colleges that successfully graduate low-income and minority students don't ask less of them. They ask more. Researchers have found that more challenging coursework makes success rates go up, not down.

The public's blindness to mass failure in higher education is bolstered by chronological happenstance: students move from high school to college at the same time that they reach the legal age of majority. As a result, without much thought, we've applied a binary mindset to education: elementary and secondary students are children; if they fail, it's the fault of the schools. College students are adults; if they fail, it's the fault of the students.

Of course, this makes little sense. College students don't become entirely different people in the three months that pass between walking off the high school graduation stage and moving into the freshman dorm. To be sure, the proper balance of responsibility between student and school moves toward students over time. But the burden shouldn't lurch suddenly and completely onto students between the twelfth and thirteenth grades. Good colleges understand this and take it into account. That's why the data on colleges show such a correlation between extensive student support, especially during the freshman and sophomore years, and high graduation rates. Yet the blame-the-student mindset persists all the same.

This sort of indifference sets the stage for dismal institutions like Chicago State to prey on underserved communities, not just for years but for decades, without anyone really noticing. When a prestigious school such as the flagship University of Illinois campus in Urbana-Champaign turns out to be making politically influenced admissions decisions, it's national news. (When such reports surfaced, Illinois Governor Patrick Quinn immediately stepped in and forced seven of the school's nine trustees to resign.) When a dropout factory like Chicago State turns in a 13 percent graduation rate, it's business as usual.

It's not just the public that's uninvolved. While public universities are in theory overseen by a combination of state officials



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and voluntary accrediting bodies, none of them use their power in a manner that's genuinely ameliorative. Low graduation rates will never cause a loss of accreditation. The fifty dropout factories listed on page 22—some of which have graduation rates in the single digits—are all accredited and advertise that fact prominently on their Web sites. Even when accreditors do pay attention to problems at a school, they tend to be slow and secretive in revealing their findings. Chicago State's accreditor expressed "serious concern" about the school as far back as 2003, but this was never publicized. Not even the Illinois Board of Higher Education, which monitors Chicago State, knew about it. Only in 2009, when the *Chicago Tribune* published damning excerpts from a leaked confidential letter from the accreditor to the university, did more than a few parties know that Chicago State might be in trouble.

As for helping your students earn degrees, why bother? State appropriations systems and federal financial aid are based on enrollment: as long as students keep coming, the money keeps flowing. And since the total number of college students increased from 7.4 million in 1984 to 10.8 million in 2009, colleges have many students to waste. "It's like trench warfare in World War I," says Michael Kirst, a Stanford University education professor. "You blow the whistle, and they come out of the trenches, and they get mowed down, but there are always more troops coming over. It's very easy to get new troops. If 85 percent of them don't finish, there's another 85 percent of them that can come in to take their place."

Colleges have an obligation to maintain academic standards, and the slothful are rightly denied degrees. But there is a huge difference between "not everyone graduates" and "hardly anyone graduates."

That's not the only problem with how funding for higher education is designed. It's not uncommon for flagship research universities that enroll a disproportionate number of smart, well-off students to receive double the per-student funding allotted to regional universities and former normal schools like Chicago State. In K–12 education, that kind of misallocation often results in multibillion-dollar legal judgments against the state. In higher education, it's called "meritocracy."

In such a climate, there's very little profit in mending one's ways. After all, you can't get credit for solving a problem people don't think exists. Nearly everyone has heard of Michelle Rhee, chancellor of the District of Columbia public schools, and her battle with the education bureaucracy of Washington, D.C. Who has heard of Charlie Nelms, chancellor of North Carolina Central University? Similarly, many people have heard of the last two Chicago school superintendents: Paul Vallas, who went on to run for governor, and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. Who has heard of the president of Jackson State, Leslie McLemore? College presidents don't become rich and famous by turning around Chicago State. They make their careers by never working for Chicago State in the first place.

While big-city mayors like Richard Daley and Michael Bloomberg like to focus on fixing K–12 education, few bother to go after any of the moribund public universities that students who survive the K–12 system often attend. Fortunately, some public figures are starting to see things differently. When Secretary Duncan was asked about the college graduation problem at a public event recently, he proposed that high school guidance counselors actively discourage students from enrolling in colleges that persistently fail. Melissa Roderick, the lead author of the CSSR report about Chicago public school students' college graduation rates, notes that some high schools are banning certain universities from their college fairs because it's understood that the colleges will not serve their students well.

But it's not enough just to tell high school students, "Buyer beware." In other areas of the economy, consumers rightly expect government to protect them from grossly defective products. Governors and state legislatures should do the same, in part by tying a significant portion of state funding to graduation rate goals. Accreditors, for their part, could make their evaluations public and link graduation rates to accreditation. That could go hand in hand with intensified scrutiny of academic standards, to ensure that colleges don't react to graduation rate pressure by turning into diploma mills.

But we won't make real headway on the college graduation problem until two even more fundamental steps are taken. The first is acknowledging that colleges share responsibility for graduation with their students. Without that, governors, mayors, accreditors, and secretaries of education won't be willing to expend scarce political capital on behalf of students like Nestor. The second is a willingness to broach a heretofore-forbidden topic in higher education: shutting the worst institutions down.

On the surface, a peaceful university campus can seem like a vital asset to the community. But a university with an 87 percent dropout rate is a service to no one. And chronically dysfunctional organizations can be very difficult to change. There is no reason that states can't quickly build newer, better, more cost-effective public universities to educate people who are currently stuck in college dropout factories. No university, regardless of historical legacies or sunk cost, is worth the price being exacted from thousands of students who leave in despair. The sooner we acknowledge that, the better off those students—and the rest of us—will be. WM

Ben Miller is a policy analyst at Education Sector. **Phuong Ly** is a journalist who writes frequently on education and immigration issues. She is currently a John S. Knight Fellow in journalism at Stanford University.

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College in a food court: Claudia Neuhauser, UMR's vice chancellor for academic affairs, stands amid the campus finery.

Tom Roster

THE MAYO CLINIC OF HIGHER ED

Has Minnesota found the cure for spiraling college costs?

By Kevin Carey

On a cold Friday afternoon in February, Chelsea Griffin walked through the fading winter light of downtown Rochester, Minnesota, past old-style restaurants and stores filled with balloons and flowers, into the marble-clad halls of the Mayo Clinic.

An elevator and staircase led her to a windowless laboratory, with a stainless steel sink on her left and cabinets filled with medical equipment on her right. In the center of the room, lying prone on a table, was the corpse of a middle-aged man. His chest was split open and his ribs were splayed to either side. Chelsea put on a white laboratory coat and pulled a pair of blue latex gloves over her hands. As a group of students watched, she reached into the cavity and pulled out the heart, feeling the weight of it in her wrist and arm. Her index finger traced a path to a spot just above the right ventricle. She knew this part of the internal human anatomy better than any other. Twice, she had undergone surgery to repair a hole there that threatened her life.

The thought of it brought her up short, and her eyes welled with tears. For a moment, her perspective shifted up and out. She saw herself, standing in a lab coat with a stranger's heart in her hands. This, she thought, is where I'm meant to be.

And yet, if it were up to the norms and conventions of American higher education, Chelsea wouldn't have been there. Chelsea is not a doctor or a nurse, or an intern or a researcher or even an upperclassman studying pre-med. She was, at that moment, an eighteen-year-old college freshman. Instead of

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sitting bored in the back of a cavernous lecture hall or starting another weekend bacchanal, she's been getting the kind of education that most undergraduates only dream about: modern facilities, small classes taught by tenure-track professors, a cutting-edge interdisciplinary curriculum, and access to the best minds of science and industry. Instead of reading about human anatomy, Chelsea Griffin sees it firsthand.

In a competitive economy, many students need an education like this. Unfortunately, most people like Chelsea aren't getting one. The small colleges that specialize in high-quality teaching tend to be exclusive and cripplingly expensive. Meanwhile, the public universities that educate most students are in crisis. Rocked by steep budget cuts, they're increasing class sizes, cutting faculty salaries, and turning away tens of thousands of qualified students. Many of those universities offered a mediocre, impersonal education to begin with. Now they're getting worse, and nobody seems to know how to stop the bleeding.

If you give eighteen-year-olds a lot of work and commensurate support, they'll do it. If you give them little work, a lot of free time, and an elaborate social infrastructure centered on alcohol consumption, they'll react accordingly.

But here's the thing about Chelsea: she isn't enrolled at an ancient private liberal arts college or an exclusive, wealthy university. Her institution admitted its first undergraduates less than a year ago. And while nearly every other public university in America is retrenching, Chelsea's university is expanding, under exactly the same financial conditions. What will the taxpayer cost of this expansion be? Nothing at all.

Chelsea's school has an unremarkable-sounding name but a groundbreaking approach to education. She is a student at the University of Minnesota Rochester, a campus based on the idea that most of what we know about how a public university should operate is wrong, that it can be done better, for modest amounts of money, right away. States across the nation could solve many of their higher education problems by replicating this effort—if they can overcome the entrenched interests of existing colleges and their own failure of imagination.

Understanding what UMR is requires first understanding what it is not: an institution built in the classic mold. That model was established in the late nineteenth century, based on the German research university, and revolves around the individual scholar. In the mind's eye, we still see men like Newton, hunched over a desk in the stone aeries of Trinity College, revealing the universe through sheer force of cognition. That kind of individuality goes hand in hand with autonomy. And autonomy, more than anything else, has defined the way higher education works today.

Ideas like these were on Stephen Lehmkuhle's mind when he first arrived in Rochester in 2007. Tall and balding with a genial affect and a neat moustache, Lehmkuhle was then a senior administrator in the University of Missouri system. He was also, crucially, a trained experimental psychologist. He had thought deeply about the human brain and the vast web of neural links that turn a mass of individual cells into glorious, high-functioning complexity. Yet when he looked around his university, he saw instance after instance of unmade connections between the autonomous components of organizations that were far more atomized than they needed to be.

Lehmkuhle was competing to be the first chancellor of UMR. While the University of Minnesota had offered classes to Rochester's 100,000 residents since the 1960s, a blue-ribbon commission convened by Governor Tim Pawlenty recommended in 2006 to expand those operations into an official fourth branch of the university, joining Duluth, Morris, Crookston, and the flagship campus in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The commission envisioned that UMR would focus exclusively on graduate programs in health, taking advantage of the world-famous Mayo Clinic's expertise. But Lehmkuhle wanted to do more. He proposed adding a new bachelor's degree of health sciences, a novel program that would operate unlike anything else in the system. In September 2007, he got the job.

Lehmkuhle's first challenge was deciding where to put the university. College campuses tend to evolve over time into miniature city-states, with their own churches, police forces, concert halls, and security walls, cut off from surrounding communities. Lehmkuhle wanted his campus to be an integral part of Rochester. Plus, he didn't have a lot of money to work with. Fortunately, Rochester was eager for a new university to create jobs and liven up a city center whose restaurants and stores mostly served elderly visitors to Mayo. Lehmkuhle set up shop on the third and fourth floors of a shopping center in the heart of downtown, where a food court used to be. The city kicked in $11 million to help him build offices, classrooms, and laboratories.

Lehmkuhle then struck up a partnership with the city's biggest employer. Under the terms of an unusual agreement between UMR and Mayo, the clinic's doctors and researchers guest-lecture in UMR health science classes. UMR students have access to research laboratories, a 10,000-square-

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foot medical simulation center complete with robotic surgical mannequins, and other facilities—including Mayo's cadaver lab. That's how Chelsea Griffin and a small class of fellow students ended up spending time with dead people on a Friday afternoon.

Next, Lehmkuhle had to hire professors and decide how to organize their work. Traditional universities isolate their faculty in academic departments that often view one another as strange denizens of another planet at best, outright enemies at worst. Departments also accumulate administrative structures—chairs, vice chairs, and so on—over time. Lehmkuhle didn't have enough money to pay for vice chairs, and he wanted professors from different disciplines to work together. The solution: no departments.

Traditional universities also separate teaching from research. These functions are not just disconnected, but often antagonistic. Many professors vying for tenure in the publish-or-perish system are openly encouraged to neglect their students in favor of scholarship. Lehmkuhle resolved this tension by making tenure at UMR contingent on three factors: teaching, research in the academic disciplines, and research *about teaching*. For UMR professors, applying their analytic powers to their own teaching practice would be a standard part of the job.

Having connected the university to the community, disciplines to disciplines, and teaching to research, Lehmkuhle also wanted to connect students to one another. Decades of academic studies have found that sticking freshmen in passive, impersonal lectures is educational malpractice. Most students learn best when they're actively engaged in dialogue and collaboration with faculty and fellow students. UMR classrooms were to be small and intimate, with no "front" from which professors could lecture. Instead of facing a teacher, students would face one another, around tables in teams of four or five.

Rochester turned out to be a particularly hospitable place for Lehmkuhle's vision. The brothers William and Charles Mayo, who founded their clinic in the late nineteenth century, pioneered the concept of group practice, where doctors collaborate with an emphasis on diagnosis and prevention. The clinic also has a thriving medical school with a focus on hands-on education. When Lehmkuhle looks out his office window at the glass skyways that link the university to the Mayo Clinic buildings two blocks away, he sees the physical manifestation of a philosophical connection between the two institutions.

UMR began offering graduate health sciences programs in 2008. But getting final approval for the undergraduate program took time, leaving Lehmkuhle and his colleagues with only a matter of months to scramble and recruit candidates for the 2009–10 school year. They tracked down students who had already been accepted to the main Twin Cities campus and offered them the chance to be both subjects and co-designers of a novel higher education experiment. To their relief, a healthy crop of students were up for the challenge. Last fall, fifty-seven enrolled in the inaugural class.

To oversee academics, Lehmkuhle brought in Claudia Neuhauser, an applied mathematician with a PhD from Cornell. The author of papers such as "An Explicitly Spatial Version of the Lotka-Volterra Model with Interspecific Competition," Neuhauser might have seemed like an unusual choice to guide students only a few months removed from high school. But she is also the author of *Calculus for Biology and Medicine*, a well-known undergraduate textbook designed to help health science majors learn complex math. She understands the importance of building connections between disciplines.

I met Neuhauser on a Monday morning in early March, after crossing a skyway from my hotel and riding an escalator near a LensCrafters and a knitting supply shop. She explained the parallels between the UMR educational philosophy and the Mayo way of medicine. "They call it personalized health care," she said. "We call it personalized learning." Both processes require diagnosis. Who is this person, exactly? What makes them tick? And diagnosis is only as good as the information to which it's applied.

Traditional universities isolate their faculty in academic departments that often view one another as strange denizens of another planet at best, outright enemies at worst. Lehmkuhle wanted professors from different disciplines to work together. The solution: no departments.

At traditional universities, nearly all of the information generated about teaching and learning is discarded. Tests, papers, homework, class projects, and the record of day-to-day interaction between students and teachers disappear; only course syllabi and final grades remain. Lehmkuhle calls this the Las Vegas approach to higher education: "What happens in the classroom stays in the classroom."

At UMR, much of that information is being captured. The effort begins by breaking each course into two- to three-week segments called "learning objects," which are electronically

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tagged in a way that allows them to be matched in a database to student records, course materials, group assignments, draft papers, and exams. (The UMR campus was designed as a paperless environment, and students are issued identical Lenovo ThinkPad laptops, which they seem to keep two feet in front of their faces at all times.) This information will be stored in an electronic database that professors will analyze in conducting the learning research they need to get tenure. That research, in turn, will improve their ability to refine new teaching strategies. By analyzing the relationship between historical student learning patterns and specific educational techniqes, UMR may discover that students who struggle with certain concepts benefit from some learning environments but not others. Such insights will allow UMR to personalize the college experience for each student.

There are strong parallels in the health care industry, where Mayo and the Veterans Health Administration have led the way in using electronic medical records to help doctors work together and analyze huge archives of medical data. Neuhauser also oversees UMR's graduate Biomedical Informatics and Computational Biology program, where students apply large-scale statistical analysis to medical data, working in partnership with Mayo and Rochester's second-biggest employer, IBM. For the next few hours I hopped from one class to the next: first writing, then organic chemistry, then biology. As the day wore on, something unusual started to become clear. Each professor came from a different academic background and ostensibly taught a different subject. But they were all, in different ways, talking about the same thing.

We could solve many of our higher education problems nationwide by creating more schools like the University of Minnesota Rochester—but states must overcome the entrenched interests of existing colleges and their own failure of imagination.

For instance, during a writing seminar I attended, the term "creatine" came up. Creatine is a naturally occurring organic acid that athletes take in extra doses to build muscle. Later that day, the term showed up in a biology class, in which Professor Rob Dunbar noted that there are reasons to believe that ingesting large amounts of creatine could reduce muscle fatigue. How might experiments testing the proposition be designed, he asked? The class proceeded to work this out as a group.

Everyone at UMR, it turns out, was talking about creatine. Students synthesized it in chemistry, studied its effects on muscle fatigue in biology, learned how to interpret those studies in statistics, pondered the ethics of using artificial performance-enhancing substances in philosophy, and developed papers combining these perspectives in writing. Nobody worked alone, because every student at UMR takes the same structured curriculum for their first two years.

While Chelsea Griffin wants to be a cardiologist, UMR students will be able to use their health science degrees to enter a range of jobs: research scientist, hospital administrator, small-town doc with a general practice. People don't need to know much about creatine to succeed in those careers. What they need is to be able to understand things *like* creatine from the perspective of biology, chemistry, statistics, and philosophy, all at once. They need to be able to develop and improve those ideas within small, close-knit teams of other people. And they need to be able to communicate that knowledge, in writing, to the rest of the world.

This represents perhaps the most foundational of all the connections that Stephen Lehmkuhle and his colleagues have been steadily knitting together in Rochester: that between facts and ideas. Traditional college instruction—epitomized by the lecture—is largely a process of orally transmitting facts from the brain of a teacher to a student. It's a tremendously inefficient method—even harmful. UMR chemistry professor Rajeev Muthyala points to research finding that undergraduates often finish lecture-based introductory science classes with less expertise than when they started. They get *worse*.

That's because there is a crucial difference between the way novices and experts learn. Experts have a much greater ability to retain information, because they incorporate new facts into complex structures of interconnecting concepts and ideas. For an expert wrestling with large questions of, say, political economy, a data point like the failure of the Smoot-Hawley tariff of 1930 is interesting and significant for suggesting how protectionism can backfire. But a novice often doesn't know what do with new facts, where to put them, or how to connect them to other facts. Something like Smoot-Hawley is nothing more than a name and a date. Simply put, a lot of new information bounces off a novice's brain for want of a place to fit.

This is the reason that so many students at traditional universities fail organic chemistry, says Muthyala, who teaches the class at UMR. Organic chemistry is usually taught "as if it's completely disconnected from other disciplines," he says, and in many schools it's notoriously used to cull weak students in their sophomore year. But UMR students, who enroll with solid but not earth-shattering ACT scores (typically around 24, or 1100 on the SAT), all take organic chemistry as freshmen and are passing at unusually high (85 to 90 percent) rates.

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I saw Muthyala's approach to teaching in action when I attended one of his classes. For more than an hour, he stayed in motion, moving in a 270-degree arc around the room, alternating between short explanations of the material and friendly interrogation. Questions and diagrams popped up on wall-mounted projection screens as students used their laptops to examine data on spreadsheets and flip back and forth between charts on PowerPoint slides. Some pulled portable whiteboards down from racks and began scrawling out equations with green markers as other members of their team pointed and offered suggestions. "Can we rule out an ester unambiguously?" Muthyala asked at one point. "No, we cannot. Make sure you read up on proton NMR spectroscopy before you come to the next class." This went over my head, but the students seemed to understand completely. And I did understand the term "creatine" when it was mentioned. After all, it had come up in another class already.

The UMR experience is highly structured at the beginning, a marked contrast to universities that hand freshmen a huge course catalog and expect them to fend for themselves. UMR faculty from different disciplines carefully map out the sequences of their courses together, coordinating topic areas week by week. But the curriculum will be much *less* structured at the end. The plan is for these undergraduates to have a senior year devoted entirely to a personalized "capstone experience" like getting an allied health certificate at Mayo, taking graduate classes, or working with professors on new research.

The groundbreaking UMR model could not have been created at an established college or university. Stephen Lehmkuhle was only able to make all the right connections, hire all the right people, and build the right organizational culture by starting a new university from scratch.

Traditional research universities defend their departments, vice chairs, and classically tenured professors on the grounds that autonomy is vital for research. The point is arguable, but also largely irrelevant. According to the Carnegie Foundation, there are only 167 public research universities in America, out of nearly 1,700 public colleges and universities nationwide. Only sixty-three qualify as top-tier research institutions. The vast majority of students enroll somewhere else.

State lawmakers don't think much about creating new universities, because they can barely afford the existing ones. But new universities are only expensive if you build them using the old model. When the Minnesota legislature signed off on the new Rochester campus, it increased the University of Minnesota's annual budget by $6.3 million. Otherwise, it has provided no additional funding for UMR, and it doesn't intend to. The cost of UMR's planned expansion to 1,500 students by 2015 will come entirely from student tuition, which is currently the standard University of Minnesota rate of $11,976 per year.

Five years from now UMR is scheduled to receive a little over $5,000 per student from the taxpayer, which is roughly one-third of what the flagship Twin Cities campus receives today. Even after discounting spending on research, the flagship is still two to three times costlier than UMR. And, if UMR eventually grows to a modest size of 3,000 to 5,000 students, it will be the most cost-effective public university in the state, by far. That's because existing universities have to pay for things and ideas from an earlier time.

Take Winona State University, which is fifty-three miles due east of Rochester on the shores of the Mississippi River. Although it's not a research university, it has dutifully divided its faculty among five colleges and scores of departments, seventeen in the College of Liberal Arts alone. It also takes a traditional approach to buildings. In the late 1990s, Winona decided to erect a handsome new brick and stone library on the corner of the central quad. The facility holds 220,000 volumes, employs seventeen people, and sports a terrazzo floor inlaid with images of the Mississippi River and quotes from Bob Dylan. In a nod to information technology, Winona added wi-fi and included a bank of computer terminals and comfortable chairs. The cost to Minnesota taxpayers: $17.7 million, plus annual expenses for maintenance and the seventeen people.

The lecture is largely a process of orally transmitting facts from the brain of a teacher to a student. It's a tremendously inefficient method—even harmful. Undergraduates often finish introductory science classes knowing less than when they started. They get worse.

UMR took more or less the same approach in building its library, except without the brick, stone, floors, tile, books, engravings, people, or $17.7 million. UMR's library consists of wi-fi, one librarian, a bank of computer terminals, and comfortable chairs. Students who need to borrow physical books get them through the University of Minnesota's interlibrary loan. UMR's entire print collection fits in the kind of small metal bookcase you can buy at Office Depot for $129. The bottom two shelves are empty.

Instead of living in subsidized dorms, UMR students rent privately owned apartments at a group rate negotiated

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by the university. Instead of working out at the kind of elaborate fitness center that many universities have built in recent years, they go to the YMCA, which organizes intramural sports. UMR is exclusively in the teaching and learning business. It turns out that if that's the only business you're in, you can do it very well for relatively small amounts of money.

Traditional universities complain that they need expensive amenities to compete for today's entitled, hedonistic student. But the example of UMR suggests that students are quite happy to have something more modest. While UMR students have parties and take part in extracurricular activities—including a competitive ballroom dance team and something called "boot hockey," which involves boots instead of skates and brooms instead of sticks—the students take their work seriously and stay busy. I asked every student I could find how much they work on academics outside of class. The typical answer: thirty to thirty-five hours a week. According to the nonprofit National Survey of Student Engagement, only 6 percent of freshmen at the biggest, most prestigious research universities work that hard. Nearly a third work ten hours or less. Eighteen-year-olds are highly sensitive to expectations and organizational culture. If you give them a lot of work and commensurate support, they'll do it. If you give them little work, a lot of free time, and an elaborate social infrastructure centered on alcohol consumption, they'll react accordingly.

While some for-profit universities are at the cutting edge of higher education, others are just ripping students off. New public universities could combine the best of both worlds—private-sector-style innovation wedded to public values and purpose.

We need more schools like UMR, public universities dedicated to teaching and designed from the ground up with the latest technological developments and research findings in mind. Existing universities cannot and will not provide this. They won't be bulldozing their libraries, disbanding the champion basketball team, radically overhauling tenure, or demoting department chairs anytime soon. Most are doing something vaguely UMR-like—some interdisciplinary courses here, some professors experimenting with technology there. But this is a case where half measures are all but indistinguishable from no measures. Only new universities will do. Therefore, states should start building large numbers of new, innovative, highly focused, low-cost public universities.

Every state has at least one public research institution with a well-known brand name and the accreditation needed to open new branches right away. University systems can also provide support services cheaply using existing infrastructure. For instance, UMR contracts with the main Twin Cities campus to handle student financial aid applications, purchasing, and other administrative tasks.

Like Rochester, local governments will be eager to lend a financial hand. Municipalities routinely spend millions subsidizing shopping malls and condo developments. Why not universities, which bring culture, status, and prestigious jobs? A city the size of New York could easily build ten or fifteen new UMR-sized universities throughout the five boroughs, each focusing on academic specialties that match the city's economic strengths in medicine, finance, media, culture, manufacturing, and international trade. Cities like Chicago could provide better options for students mired in chronically failing public universities such as Chicago State (see page 20).

Big cities aren't the only potential location for such schools, either. Archer Daniels Midland, based in Decatur, Illinois, ranks twenty-seventh on the Fortune 500 and employs legions of scientists, chemists, and genetic engineers. Yet the only public higher education institution in Decatur is a community college. Many cities and towns across the country have economic and cultural strengths around which new public universities could be designed.

Students and faculty will flock to these institutions. Lehmkuhle was initially worried about recruiting students to an unknown university in a flat, cold city filled with people who eat dinner at 4:30 in the afternoon. Instead, nearly 400 students applied for 125 slots in the 2010 entering class. He was also concerned about finding good faculty, particularly given the unusually high expectations for teaching. Instead, it turns out that a lot of people *like* teaching, and are frustrated by traditional universities that care only about research.

The only real barrier to creating new public universities will be the objections of the existing ones. One reason it took so long to take the obvious step of opening a health-focused university in Rochester was pushback from existing southeastern Minnesota universities like Winona and Mankato State. Many existing universities see a threat from efficient, high-value institutions like UMR. And they should. Schools like UMR will put pressure on traditional institutions with bloated cost structures that have contributed to decades of skyrocketing tuition.

Indeed, there is plenty of ferment in higher education right now. It's just all happening in the for-profit sector. Venture capitalists are buying up bankrupt private colleges and turning them into for-profit money machines. Corporate giants like the University of Phoenix now serve hundreds of

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thousands of students online. While many for-profits are at the cutting edge of higher education innovation, others are shamelessly ripping students off. New public universities would combine the best of both worlds—the kind of innovation happening in the private sector wedded to public values and purpose.

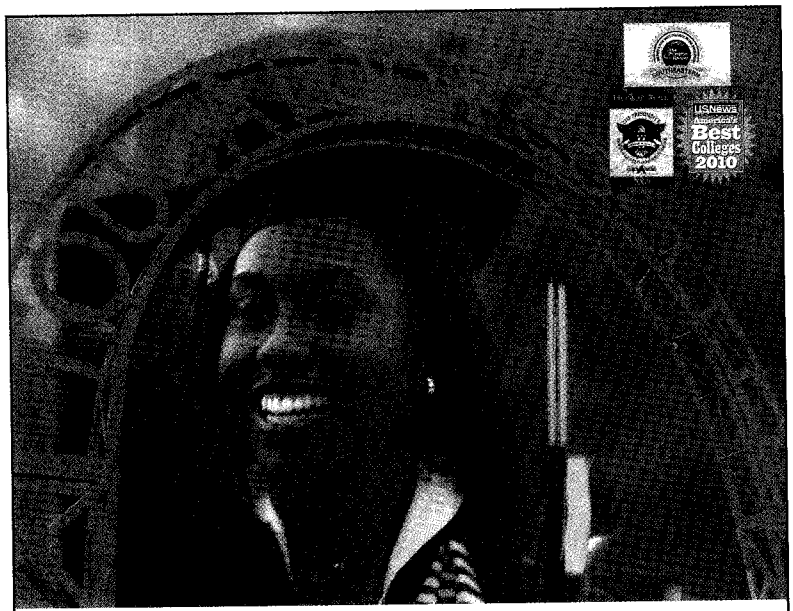
At the end of Rajeev Muthyala's chemistry class, Muthyala was telling me about "personalized learning" when a young woman with spiky black hair and a small pink nose stud walked past us, an open laptop cradled in her elbow, and said, "Ooh, *personalized learning*," with a smile as she walked out. I waited a moment until she'd left. "Do you think she doesn't buy it?" I asked. "I'd be surprised," Muthyala replied, with a look of concern. "She's one of my best students."

Her name, I later learned, is Jessica Gascoigne, and she likes personalized learning just fine. She doesn't have the natural self-confidence of young people who attend famous universities as a matter of birthright, but she's humming through organic chemistry and is one of only three freshmen who tested out of calculus before starting college. She's wanted to be a doctor ever since she and her father, a dairy equipment salesman, began sitting on the couch together Thursday nights to watch *E.R.*

For Gascoigne, the flagship University of Minnesota campus in the Twin Cities seemed monstrously large, and private St. Olaf College was far too expensive. So she commutes twenty-four miles each way to UMR from her 3,000-citizen hometown of Zumbrota (motto: "The only Zumbrota in the world"). She describes her typical weekend as "studying, and cleaning my apartment," which she shares with her roommate, a hairdresser. This explains the spiky hair.

America's system of old universities has always done a good job of educating a small percentage of talented and well-off students. But the old system is ill-equipped for Jessica Gascoigne and Chelsea Griffin and hundreds of thousands of other students who need universities that are designed to help them in the way that UMR helps its students. For now, the University of Minnesota's new Rochester campus is an interesting outlier. If more people can see the true potential of its newness, it will be much more. WM

Kevin Carey is the policy director of Education Sector, an independent think tank in Washington, D.C.



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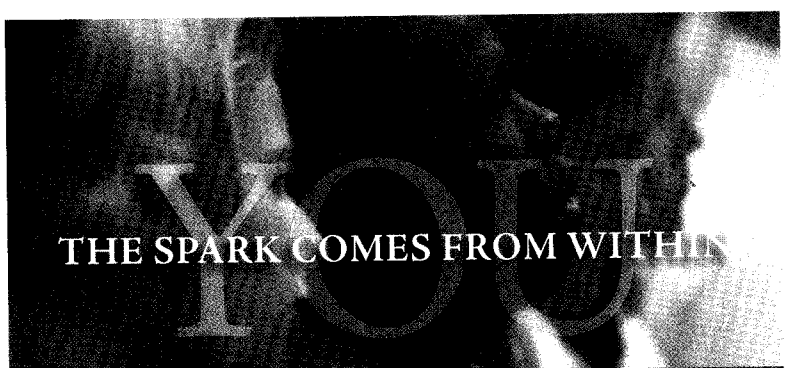

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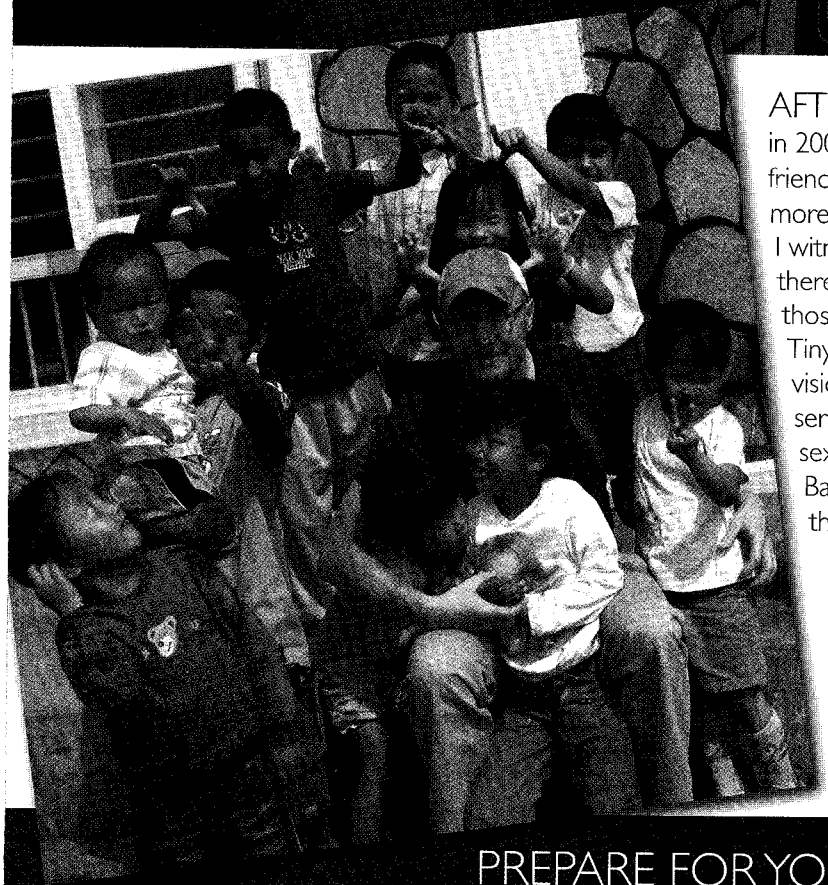
"I WAS EXPOSED TO MORE THAN A BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY; MY HEART WAS BROKEN FOR THE INJUSTICES I WITNESSED..."



AFTER I GRADUATED FROM TAYLOR UNIVERSITY in 2002, I decided to backpack through Nepal with some of my good friends just to see more of the world. On that trip I was exposed to more than a beautiful country; my heart was broken for the injustices I witnessed. The poverty and desperation was so immense. I knew there must be something I could and should do. With the help of those friends and countless others, I started an organization called Tiny Hands International and moved to Nepal full time. It is our vision to empower indigenous Christians in the developing world to serve the poor - especially orphans, street children, and victims of sex trafficking. We have expanded our work to parts of India and Bangladesh. We do all this in the name of, in obedience to, and for the purpose of glorifying the name of Jesus Christ.

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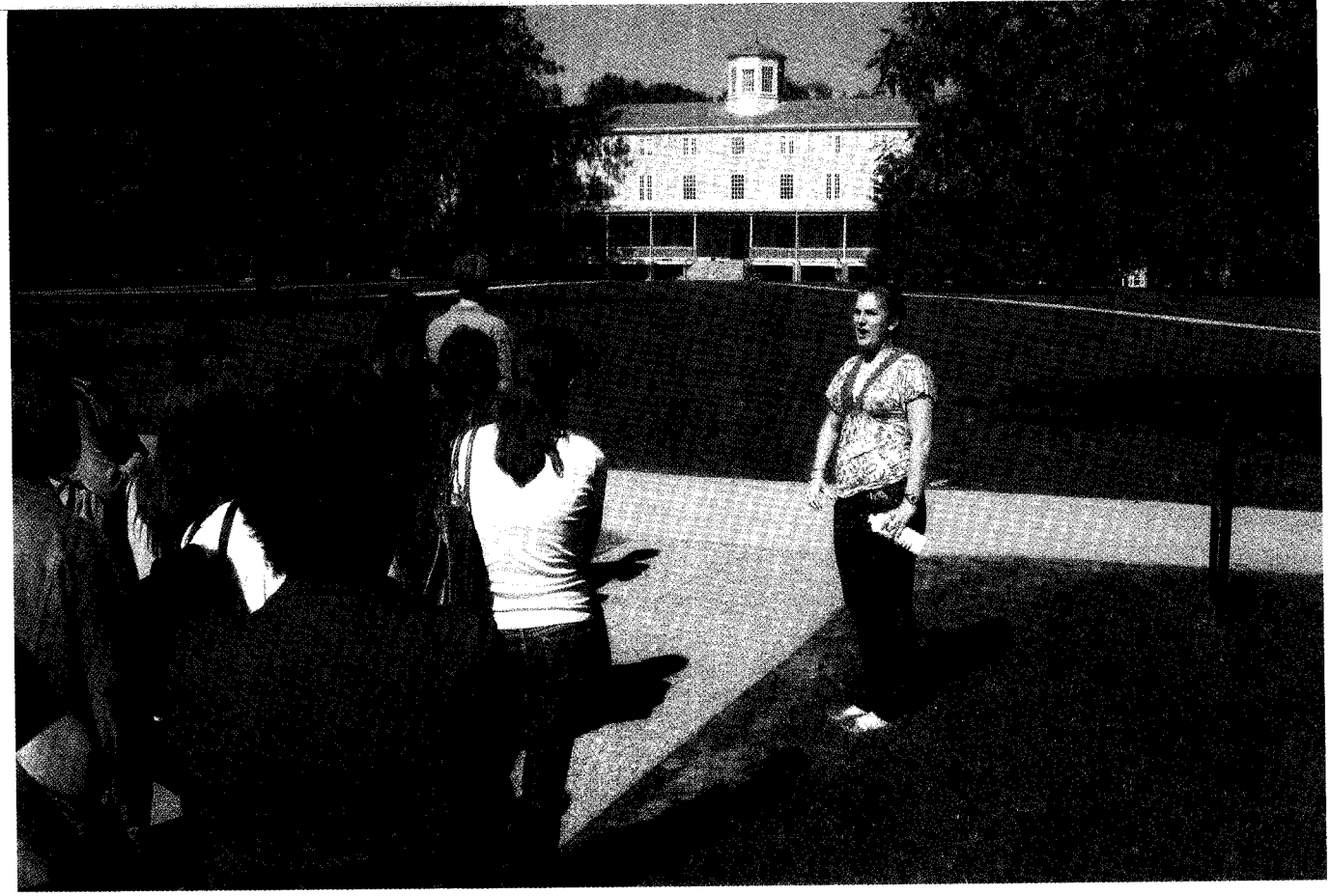

Lawrence G. Miller

CAMPUS TOURS GO DISNEY

THE TRADITIONAL COLLEGE VISIT HAS GOTTEN MORE INTERESTING. AND MORE MANIPULATIVE.

By Eric Hoover

Jeff Kallay digs the Magic Kingdom. Growing up near Orlando, he spent many sunny days at Walt Disney World, riding the Space Mountain roller coaster and splashing in swimming pools. On "Senior Nite" in high school, he danced at the resort as the Pointer Sisters sang "I'm So Excited." He has since returned again and again. Now forty-seven, he figures he's visited the place more than 150 times.

None of these details mean much unless you or your children plan to attend college. But if the latter is the case, Jeff Kallay's story matters a lot. This Disney kid grew up to become an influential consultant whose clients include more than 100 colleges and universities. He applies lessons he learned at the theme park to an American rite of passage: the campus tour.

This ritual has never been more important, for colleges and applicants alike. In a bleak economy, tuition-dependent institutions face increasing competition for paying customers, and administrators are pulling out all the stops to recruit them. In turn, the choices applicants make have lifelong consequences—and often come with big price tags. For both parties, the tour is crucial. Research shows that nothing influences a student's decision about where to apply and enroll as much as the visit.

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So plenty's at stake when families pack up the minivan and drive from college to college, hoping to glean something at each stop.

For decades, most campus tours were as plain and standard as notebook paper. But recently, many colleges have turned the traditional tour into a more intimate, more elaborate event. Some colleges have full-time "visit coordinators" who preside over tours with personalized touches, quirky diversions, choreographed "signature moments," and even souvenirs—the stuff of theme parks. Such changes have made tours more fun and engaging, and families tend to get multiple options for who to meet and what to see during their visits. But what are they really getting?

You might think that touring a campus is like test-driving a car. Both give you a chance to kick the tires, form a few emotional impressions, and ask some pointed questions. But car buyers have something that college applicants don't: bottom-line measures of quality and value. Before you buy that shiny new sedan, you can look at hard numbers—gas mileage, safety tests, reliability, and so on. You can turn to independent car ratings, like those in *Consumer Reports*, to see how similar models compare on such measures, or consult the Kelley Blue Book to determine what a particular vehicle might fetch in the resale market. You can then weigh this objective numerical data against the emotional ooh-and-ahh you experienced behind the wheel.

You might think that touring a campus is like test-driving a car. Both give you a chance to kick the tires, form impressions, and ask questions. But car buyers have something college applicants don't: bottom-line measures of quality and value.

The problem in higher education is that there is a dearth of useful, easy-to-compare bottom-line data. What kind of learning occurs inside classrooms? How well do professors teach? After students graduate, what do their career paths look like, and how much do they earn? *U.S. News & World Report*'s popular rankings can't answer such questions because they mostly look at inputs, like incoming freshman SAT scores, not outcomes. (Although reliable measures of learning and "student engagement" exist, few colleges and universities publicize the results of those assessments.)

This absence of objective outcomes data means that students and families are left to rely almost entirely on subjective, experiential factors when deciding what college to choose. This has overinflated the importance of campus tours and fueled the costly arms race of building at colleges in recent years. All those luxurious dorms and state-of-the-art recreational centers do little to improve learning, and have helped drive up tuition. But administrators feel they have to build them to impress prospective students and, in some cases, fill classrooms. How else are they to compete? These days, almost every college has a new gym and cafeteria to show off, not to mention shady lawns and pretty trees. And so colleges are under pressure to find fresh ways to stand out.

Jeff Kallay is a pioneer in this new frontier of college recruitment. Campus tours, he preaches, should not only relay information, but also create a memory. What makes a company (or college) great, he believes, isn't just products or services: "It's all about the experience." To that end, he encourages colleges to tell stories that will distinguish them from competitors, to engineer an experience that will stick in consumers' minds. Call it the Gospel According to Mickey.

Above all, Kallay advises colleges to embrace "authenticity"—which might sound strange coming from an avowed devotee of Walt Disney. Kallay, who calls himself the "Apostle of Authenticity," urges colleges to throw away their scripts and allow student tour guides to talk about their own experiences. What's most important, he says, is to create a sense of genuineness—an intimate experience unique to the campus. That fleeting sensation is worth more than all the expensive marketing in the world.

For weary campus-hopping families, the changes Kallay promotes are welcome in many ways. In nine years of covering higher education, I've taken the official tour at about fifty campuses. Most were bland, rote, and robotic; the memory of them evaporated almost instantly. Today, tours of two different campuses are less likely than before to seem eerily similar, which, for folks visiting ten schools in five days, is very good news. Moreover, when prospective students visit colleges, they're not just seeking information about outcomes; they want to know what it would be like to eat, sleep, and socialize at a school for four or more years. So tours designed to convey that "experience" provide something consumers want.

But make no mistake: the newfangled college tour is a more sophisticated sales pitch than ever. Behind the scenes, many tours include an increasingly large cast of

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participants, including administrators, professors, and students, who think long and hard about what visitors see and hear. Traditional tours included a litany of statistics, all meant to convey the college's quality. Now, tour guides appeal to your emotions with personal stories and anecdotes. It's recruitment by eye contact. At their best, modern tours are more candid and conversational—but at their worst, they're just more artfully manipulative.

Recently, York College of Pennsylvania hired Kallay to help transform its tour. As a result, the college enacted a series of small changes. Previously, visitors gathered in the cramped lobby of the administration building. Now, the college directs them to the welcome center in the student union, where they will find coffee, cookies, and light conversation. Student guides are trained to tell stories about their time at York, the more specific, the better.

When guides see a faculty member walk by, they're supposed to stop and introduce them. When prospective students go inside dorms, they get to sign their name on a wall. Before leaving the campus, they can take a York Peppermint Patty (created just a few miles from campus) and a York College water bottle. "The goal is to create a warm memory about the York College culture," the college's Web site says.

Choosing a college is often an irrational decision, based partly on the judgments teenagers and their parents make as they stroll down brick walkways and stare up at bell towers. Students can sour on a college because they have an argument with their parents in the car, or because they don't like the tour guide's hairstyle or clothes or sense of humor. Sometimes, a rainy day can drown a student's interest in a college, or vice versa. One high school counselor tells me that her husband chose his alma mater because it poured during his first visit, soaking the T-shirt of his buxom tour guide.

Simply put, the tour is the blind date of the admissions process. Looks matter a lot to the beholder, and first impressions do much to shape future actions. That's why admissions officers have long called the tour the "golden mile" and the "million-dollar walk." This walk has been a way to promote college as a place of contentment, beauty, and plenty. A generation ago, Ernest L. Boyer examined this ritual while conducting a landmark study of higher education, for which he spent three years visiting thirty colleges and interviewing professors, students, and parents. In 1987, Boyer, a former U.S. commissioner of education, published his findings in *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America*. He concluded that colleges' priorities had drifted away from teaching.

In a passage on campus visits, Boyer described how the tours tended to whisk students past the library, only to linger inside student union buildings, where there was much to eat, buy, and do. Riffs on dorm living and social activities were more common than mentions of the instructors who taught undergraduate courses. "One had the distinct impression that the campus was a place with abundant social life," Boyer wrote. "Education was ignored."

When Boyer and his fellow researchers asked students what influenced them most during visits, about half mentioned the "friendliness" of other students they had met. Yet nothing was more important than the appearance of the campus. "We gained the distinct impression that when it comes to recruiting students," Boyer wrote, "the director of buildings and grounds may be more important than the academic dean."

Since then, college officials have thought harder about the experiential elements of the tour. One reason: parents have become co-purchasers, a constituency for a college to impress during a visit. Students themselves have become savvier consumers, applying to more colleges (and visiting more of them) than they did a generation ago. Finally, the Web allows shoppers to learn the basics about a campus before setting foot on it. This is why many campus administrators now believe facts-and-figures information sessions just won't cut it anymore.

At the University of Louisville, visitors are told to bring their cameras and keep an eye out for the rare white squirrels that live on the campus. Parents and students who snap photographs of the creatures get a free T-shirt that says, "I spotted the white squirrel."

For a long time, there was safety in the sameness of college marketing. In the quest for diverse applicants, many colleges have promoted themselves as offering all things to all people. Daniel M. Lundquist, who has worked in admissions since 1976 and is now the vice president for external relations and enrollment management at the Sage Colleges, in New York, says traditional tours tend to be "vanilla and rah-rah" for that very reason. "Colleges are risk averse in their storytelling," says Lundquist. "They like to talk about their brand pillars. The problem is those qualities are so universal that they're not dis-

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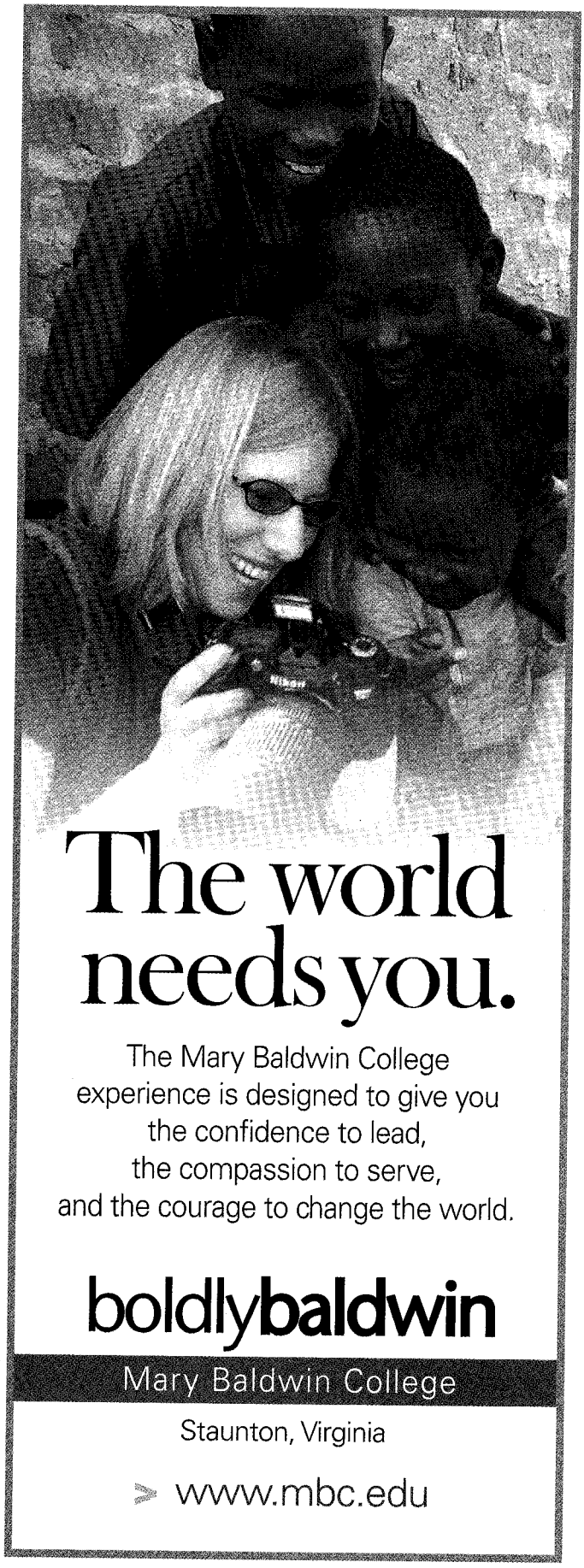

tinctive: study abroad, a low student-to-faculty ratio, career counseling. Most people visiting the campus probably know those things already, but those things don't reveal the elusive personality of the campus."

That's exactly what Jeff Kallay began trying to capture way back in the 1980s. As a student tour guide at Lee University, in Cleveland, Tennessee, he liked nothing more than sharing anecdotes about his experiences on the campus. He spoke frankly—pointing out, for instance, where the geeks and "troglodytes" lived. After graduating with a degree in communications, he worked as director of recruitment in Lee's admissions office, and then moved on to jobs in marketing and advertising. One day he read *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theater & Every Business a Stage*, published in 1999 by James H. Gilmore and Joseph Pine II. The book expanded on the idea that companies must create experiences for their customers. Memories of those experiences, the theory goes, cause consumers to form a lasting emotional bond with a product.

Kallay had found his bible. Years later, he wrote a business plan that would bring the principles of the experience economy to campus tours. In 2006, he went to work for TargetX, a Pennsylvania-based company that specializes in student-recruitment strategies. Calling himself an "experience evangelist," Kallay was soon trekking from college to college to conduct "campus visit audits." At each stop, he took the official tour, and then shared his first impressions with admissions officers. He followed up with detailed reports, with recommendations for improving parking and signage.

Because appearances matter, Kallay noted things like cracks in walls and dust bunnies in stairwells. Yet he saved his sermons for the subject of human interaction. Listening and eye contact matter more than climbing walls and glitzy dorms, he told his clients. He encouraged security guards to wave, secretaries to smile, and tour guides to ask open-ended questions (and to stop walking backward). In presentations, he has even suggested that tours should deemphasize their facilities, even if it means skipping the library. "Everyone's got one," he says.

By early 2009, Kallay had worked with more than seventy colleges, charging between $2,500 and $20,000, depending on the number of work days required. With demand growing, he hired a young assistant named Trent Gilbert, who had helped him develop the business plan for a campus-tour consulting business. Gilbert, now thirty, has since taken over the week-to-week tour evaluations. Like Kallay, he has a background in college admissions, and is an electric speaker who makes his audiences laugh. Gilbert's title is CXO: "Chief eXperience Officer."

"For hundreds of years, colleges have been staging themselves as places of experience anchored in education, entertainment, aesthetic, and escape," Gilbert says. "But many visits are not operating on all those levels." To

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change that, Gilbert encourages student tour guides to share personal stories. He emphasizes the importance of anecdotes that reveal three things: students' conflicts, their coming-of-age experiences, and their unique impressions of the campus. They should talk about how, for instance, they overcame homesickness, a difficult roommate, or a challenging course. Gilbert encourages them to describe the snowy night when they went sledding with their friends on trays they borrowed from the cafeteria, or the time a history professor texted an encouraging message about that twenty-page paper. If the tour guide likes to study under a particular tree, then, Gilbert insists, he or she should show families that tree.

Also, pronouns are crucial. Gilbert tells students to use "we" a lot instead of "I" and "you." "We try to inspire tour guides to tell stories that will become shared experiences with families," he says.

Gilbert suggests that colleges think about creating a "signature moment" during tours. Moreover, he urges them to consider ways of engaging the five senses (taste is usually the trickiest one). At the University of Akron, visitors gather around a forty-foot-tall statue by Dale Chihuly, a blue glass tower known as the "rock candy" sculpture. Later, guests receive a stick of blue rock candy, with a tag that thanks them for visiting and directs them to information about the artist and the university. (It's the kind of marketing that might just crack your tooth.)

Kallay and Gilbert have also worked with Alfred University, in New York, where visitors may now tour the school while pedaling a Conference Bike, a bicycle built for seven. The experience is supposed to convey the kind of communal experiences students can expect to have on the small campus. At the University of Louisville, visitors are told to bring their cameras and keep an eye out for the rare white squirrels that live on the campus. Parents and students who snap photographs of the creatures get a free T-shirt that says, "I spotted the white squirrel."

Students who visit Ohio State University's main campus in Columbus may have their picture taken with a likeness of Brutus, the mascot. Before leaving they receive the photo in a themed card, as well as a chocolate-and-peanut-butter "Buckeye" candy. Later, the university sends thank-you notes to visitors. "You're looking for takeaways that they remember," says Mabel G. Freeman, assistant vice president for undergraduate admissions and first-year experience. "Yes, you want them to be great students, but first they've got to feel comfortable at the university."

American University in Washington, D.C., recently relocated its visitors center to the breathtaking new visual and performing arts building. Each prospective student now gets a lanyard and a badge identifying him or her as a "VIP." The badge accompanies a brochure about American and, as Kallay writes on his blog, "becomes a valued piece of memorabilia."

Sharon M. Alston, executive director for enrollment management at American, says the consultants have helped the university officials understand that it's okay for tour guides to take greater control of the tour, even if means sacrificing some of the pro-AU messaging. "It's the authenticity piece," Alston says. "If you're asking people to invest forty to fifty thousand dollars a year, I think that we have to make an emotional as well as an intellectual connection to get them to make that decision."

Adam Bigott made an emotional connection with Hendrix College last November. After he and his parents pulled into the parking lot, they discovered a spot with a sign that said, "Reserved for Adam Bigott." They smiled. "It got me super excited," Adam says.

Research shows that nothing influences a student's decision about where to go to college as much as the campus visit. So plenty's at stake when families pack up the minivan and drive from college to college, hoping to glean something at each stop.

By then, the Bigotts, who live in Illinois, had visited several small liberal arts colleges in the Midwest. Adam had applied to Hendrix, in Arkansas, but he was unsure about the college, which was ten hours away from home. His feelings changed after he spent a day and a half at the school, which epitomizes today's campus tour like no other college. At Hendrix, each preregistered visitor gets a personalized pamphlet and itinerary. He or she chooses one of eight classes to attend; borrows a backpack and notebook; takes a guided walk of the campus; eats in the cafeteria; and meets with a faculty member and an admissions representative. Parents and students are split up, leaving teenagers free to ask all those questions about dating and drinking.

There's a dash of sensory programming: visitors walk on a stretch of campus covered with pecan shells and dip their hands into fountains. When they leave, they will have met with at least five students from a vast team of volunteers. High school seniors will also find a package

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waiting for them in the mailroom. It contains a tie-dyed T-shirt bearing a slogan ("Are You Experienced?") that evokes a famous Hendrix named Jimi.

Adam Bigott enjoyed all the fanfare, but what he liked best was the time he spent with the head of the physics department, who took him to the basement to show him high-tech laser equipment. That night, he stayed in a dorm with students, whom he peppered with questions about what was good about Hendrix and what wasn't. The next day, he received an envelope containing an acceptance letter—and plenty of glitter. He accepted.

"Hendrix never lied to me—they said this is who we are and we aren't for everyone," Adam says. "At a lot of other schools, it felt like everyone was pushing the school on you, like cheerleaders. I felt like they were the ones deceiving me."

Students can sour on a college because they have an argument with their parents in the car, or because it's a rainy day. But it can also work the other way: one applicant chose his school because it poured during his visit, soaking the T-shirt of his buxom tour guide.

Bigott seems pleased with his experience and his choice of college, but of course even the most "authentic" tour is unlikely to reveal a school's real warts. A campus tour guide is not going to admit that, say, cheating is rampant among math majors, any more than a prospective applicant is going to admit that he cheated on his last algebra test. So asking personal questions of tour guides will only get you so far, says Steven Roy Goodman, a D.C.-based college "admissions strategist" who makes a living helping students describe themselves favorably to admissions committees. Goodman thinks that tour guides' life stories are of little use to visitors trying to determine how well they would fit in on a particular campus. So he suggests describing your own interests to guides, and then asking them if they know anybody who's similar. "The question forces them to get off script," he says.

Goodman is often reminded of how today's tours push consumers' buttons. Recently, he scheduled a visit to Chapman University, in California. He received a confirmation that looked just like an old-fashioned movie ticket, stamped with the tour's start time. "The tour's become an event," he says. "There's a reason Disney World is one of the most popular tourist destinations. Americans expect a show."

Like many counselors, Goodman encourages students to consider where the information they hear is coming from. At all but the most selective colleges, admissions officers have a difficult job: filling campus beds with the most qualified students possible. This doesn't mean they are bad people—just that they're under a lot of pressure. Failure to meet enrollment goals has severe consequences, financial and otherwise, for colleges. So families should know that they are on the receiving end of messages shaped, at least in part, by competitive instincts.

All the more reason why visitors should do as much homework as they can—and ask a lot of questions. For instance, the federal government now requires all colleges to report their graduation rates. Schools that do well on that measure usually brag about it in their tours, but those that do poorly tend not to reveal the information without prodding. And unless visitors ask, they probably won't learn anything specific about how academic advising works, or what happens when students find that a required course is full, or how the college helps students who struggle.

Whatever cues they take from Disney, Kallay and Gilbert aren't your smooth-talking slicksters from central casting. On the contrary, they're thoughtful students of pop culture who think in terms of narratives. Their idea of selling college as a life-changing, sensory experience might offend academic purists, who could ask, "Isn't college supposed to be about education?" But families' decisions often don't hinge on perceptions of academic quality alone. Most also consider costs, as well as all the intangibles—the feel of the campus, the vibe on the quad, and the kinds of people they meet there.

Although colleges can and should give families much more revealing outcomes data than they do, it would be impossible to quantify everything that students experience once they enroll. The friendships they make. The conversations they have. The books they read. To choose a college is to make a leap of faith in a world where some things aren't measurable. Kallay and Gilbert provide a useful service to the extent that they help prospective students get a better sense for those intangibles.

So go ahead, take the tour. But also take this advice from a father I interviewed who visited seven colleges this spring: "Don't leave your bullshit detector at home." WM

Eric Hoover is a senior writer at the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

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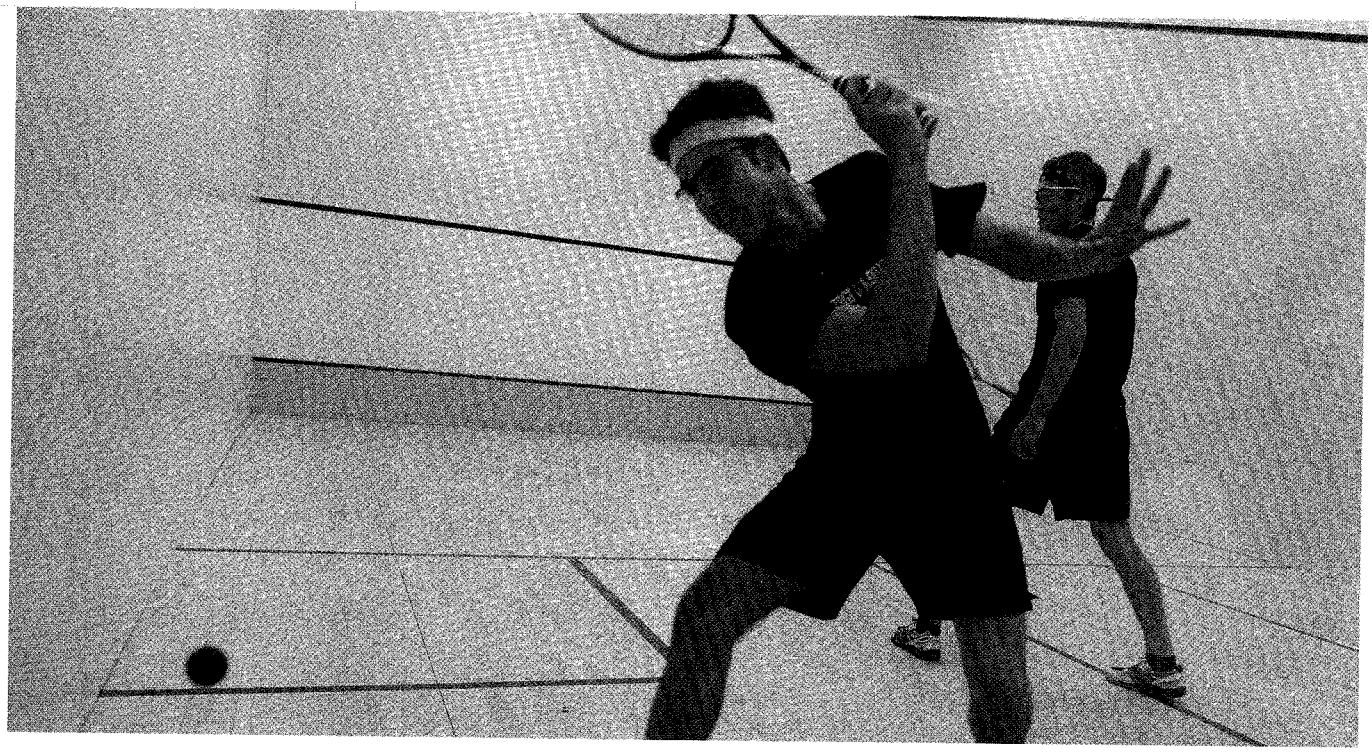

Courting status: In an attempt to compete with the Ivy League, GW started its own varsity squash team in 2002.

THE PRESTIGE RACKET

How schools like George Washington University learned to offer Timex educations at Rolex prices.

By Daniel Luzer

In the summer of 1961, a twenty-two-year-old college graduate from rural Nevada packed up his young family and moved to Washington, D.C. He took a job working nights as a U.S. Capitol policeman while by day he studied for a law degree in Foggy Bottom, at a local commuter school by the name of George Washington University.

Foggy Bottom in those days was an unfashionable neighborhood of State Department office buildings, apartment blocks, decrepit townhouses, bodegas, and parking lots. GW's campus was an unlovely spread of mostly concrete structures frequented by students who sat for classes and then returned to their lives and apartments off-campus. They came because the school offered an education that was convenient, affordable, and thoroughly adequate to the needs of, say, a Department of Agriculture employee looking to secure a pay raise with a new degree, or a Maryland housewife going back to college once her kids were out of the house.

Because Washington has always been a city full of busy people anxious to advance but tied to their jobs, the school saw a number of up-and-coming D.C. notables pass quietly through its doors. Colin Powell got his MBA there while serving as a White House fellow; J. Edgar Hoover studied law while working at the Library of Congress; and Jacqueline Bouvier (later Mrs. John F. Kennedy) finished her bachelor's in French literature there, four miles away from her mother's house in McLean, while taking photographs for the *Washington Times-Herald*.

The school, in other words, was no Georgetown—GW's highbrow neighbor up the Potomac—but it filled a valuable niche and helped advance the careers of some prominent public servants. That young Nevadan police officer's time at GW,

Washington Post/Getty Images

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for instance, paid off pretty well in the long run. Just four years after he finished his degree and returned home to serve as a city attorney, he was elected to the Nevada state assembly. Eighteen years later Nevada elected him to the U.S. Senate; twenty years after that, he became the body's majority leader. His name is Harry Reid.

If Reid were starting his career today, however, he probably couldn't afford a GW law degree on a policeman's salary. Today George Washington, like many "up-and-coming" second-tier schools—American University, New York University—is ruinously expensive. After decades of offering a low-cost education, GW took a sharp turn upmarket in the late 1980s under the presidency of Stephen Joel Trachtenberg. The university went on a high-class building spree, financed by a dizzying series of tuition increases. When Trachtenberg took office, undergraduate tuition was $14,000—below average for a private, four-year college. By the time he left in 2007, it had mushroomed to $39,000 a year (or, including fees and room and board, a whopping $50,000)—making GW the most expensive school in the United States.

What Trachtenberg understood was that perception is reality in higher education—and perception can be bought. "You can get a Timex or a Casio for $65 or you can get a Rolex or a Patek Philippe for $10,000. It's the same thing," Trachtenberg says. The former president gambled that students who couldn't quite get into the nation's most exclusive colleges—and who would otherwise overlook a workmanlike school like the old GW—would flock to a university that at least had a price tag and a swank campus like those of the Ivy Leagues. "It serves as a trophy, a symbol," he says. "It's a sort of token of who they think they are."

What's amazing is that this strategy worked. During Trachtenberg's tenure, applications for undergraduate admission increased from 6,000 to 20,000 a year, GW students' average SAT scores increased by 200 points, the endowment increased to almost $1 billion—still quite low for GW's size, but higher than the $200 million nest egg Trachtenberg inherited—and the university created five new schools.

Welcome to today's increasingly elite higher education system, where lavish campuses, high tuition, and huge undergraduate debt loads have become the norm. In dogged competition for affluent, high-scoring students, today's second-tier colleges aim to achieve higher prestige by aping the superficial characteristics of America's traditionally elite schools. Indeed, there are few alternatives for ambitious administrators. "If you want to rise, you try to do the things that make you *look* like Harvard," says David Labaree, a professor of education at Stanford University. "It's hard to take a different path."

To be sure, there was more to GW's transformation than just a tuition hike and a campus makeover. The administration also engaged in an aggressive marketing campaign, smartly selling GW's location in the heart of the nation's capital as a precious asset. (A full-page advertisement in *Foreign Affairs* features a map of downtown Washington with GW highlighted. Also lit up are the IMF, the World Bank, the White House, the Treasury Department, the Federal Reserve Bank, the State Department, and the Kennedy Center. "Welcome to the neighborhood," it says.)

GW also capitalized heavily on its roster of famous alumni. The school's Web site is studded with black-and-white and color photos of the great and the good who have passed through GW's doors. The university named a dormitory after Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis, a public service award after Colin Powell, and even a science scholarship after J. Edgar Hoover. One wonders whether a Harry Reid Library might one day be in the works. But there's an irony in borrowing the prestige of these Washington luminaries: they didn't attend GW because the school was prestigious; they went because it was accessible. When it came time to pursue a degree, Harry Reid, Colin Powell, and even Jacqueline Bouvier bought a Timex, not a Rolex. But GW doesn't sell Timexes anymore. Is the public better off?

A whole host of second-tier national universities—including Boston University, Drexel, and Northeastern—operate like GW: they spend on the things that U.S. News *measures, and they pay for them with practices that* U.S. News *doesn't care about, like student loans.*

George Washington didn't found George Washington University. Initially called Columbian College, the school was founded in 1821 for "the education of Gospel Ministers." But such a modest mission didn't suit the grand designs of the school's eighth president, Charles Needham. As part of an early bid to reinvent the school as a national powerhouse, Needham struck a deal with the George Washington Memorial Association: the association would erect a palatial $500,000 campus building in honor of the first U.S. president, and the aggressively expanding university would rename itself after the great man in return. But things went quickly awry. Neither the university nor the association were able to raise enough money for the proposed growth; building costs spiraled out of control; and the university was forced to sell off real estate. The vaunted memorial building never saw the light of day, and the university

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retrenched to a single building in Foggy Bottom, where it rededicated itself to operating within its means. The new name stuck, however—an artifact of the school's early failure, and a reminder that institutional grand ambitions don't always pay off.

In the 1960s, under the presidency of Lloyd Elliott, GW began slowly expanding again, recruiting higher-quality faculty and students, buying up more of Foggy Bottom, and focusing heavily on undergraduate education—the most lucrative component of any university. But Elliott was no Needham. The campus structures he built were utilitarian and cheap. And, more importantly, he "believed in a low-tuition model," says Anthony Yezar, a professor of economics at GW since 1972.

Not so his successor. When Trachtenberg took the helm in 1988, he had a target in mind when he began raising the cost of attending GW: he wanted to match Georgetown's price tag. "I saw the gap as an opportunity," he says. The move was a rebranding effort and a development strategy wrapped into one. "If you equalize for program costs, all schools cost virtually the same amount to run," he says. "I would use that new tuition money to fund expansion."

The Capitol policeman of today doesn't look to the high-toned GW for his degree in public administration or criminal justice. Instead he might look to the many for-profit universities with multiple campuses in the D.C. area—all happy to nickel-and-dime him by the course.

With this new cash infusion, Trachtenberg bought virtually everything in Foggy Bottom, gradually transforming GW into the second-largest private landowner and the largest private employer in the District of Columbia. GW either razed or made over Foggy Bottom's poured concrete buildings, the family-owned convenience stores, the parking lots, and other staples of drab urban life. Today the neighborhood shines with contemporary architectural showpieces, each flying the banner—blue with yellow stripes—of George Washington University.

"You want to build a city on a hill," says Trachtenberg, who retired from the presidency in 2007 and now serves as GW's University Professor of Public Service. "Buying housing and building dorms—that creates a community and builds relationships between students and their university."

For an institution like GW, erecting fancy new buildings also serves a more narrowly strategic purpose: it instantly signals prestige to prospective students and buys the school traction in the *U.S. News & World Report* college rankings. Lavish buildings don't actually improve education, of course, but elite schools have them; ergo, lavish buildings are an essential ingredient for academic high status. Cornell University's student union, for instance, is a gothic-style fortress built in 1924 at a cost of $1.6 million (about $20 million in 2009 money). It has working fireplaces, two restaurants, a coffee shop, a bank, slate floors, and its own library, movie theater, and art gallery.

Cornell's student union didn't cost the school a dime—the whole building was donated by the widow of a 1902 graduate—but GW spent $24 million of its own money on renovations to create the new Marvin Student Center in the early 2000s. The university didn't need a new student union, arguably, but Trachtenberg thought it was important enough for the school to spend a lot of money to build it. Why? According to the conventional wisdom in student recruitment, statistics about job placement and department quality often seem impossibly remote to high school seniors. Instead they respond to soaring student unions, fitness centers worthy of the Olympics, and dormitories with a kitchen in every suite. GW aimed to oblige: the American Institute of Architects gave the Marvin Center its highest award, the Excellence in Architecture prize, in 2003. (The strategy behind the new center may have been even more pointed: at the time, schools were desperate for ways to increase the percentage of admitted students who enrolled, because that's something *U.S. News* measured. The magazine stopped doing so in 2003, though there is talk of reintroducing that metric.)

Buildings are not the only strategic things GW spends money on. For similarly shrewd reasons, in 2002 GW decided that it needed a varsity squash team. The only other colleges in the country with varsity squash programs for both men and women are Brown, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Penn, Princeton, and Yale. A GW athletic director explained to the *Washington Post* that the whole point of the GW squash program was to attract students who wanted to attend an Ivy League college and couldn't get in.

To an extent, those gambits to snag elite students and higher rankings have paid off. Today GW, once a nonentity in national rankings, is rated the fifty-third-best university in America by *U.S. News*—sitting just outside the magazine's "tier one," the exclusive club of great American schools.

That rise in status came at a price, however—one clearly reflected in the school's tuition rate. As a result, GW attracts a very different kind of student now. Gone, for the most part, are the moonlighting police officers and legislative assistants studying business administration by night. They have been replaced by well-heeled nineteen-year-olds from New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Long Island: tra-

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ditional college students, kids from out of state with good SAT scores and vague dreams of some sort of job in public life, maybe on Capitol Hill. "Gucci sunglasses, UGG boots and other designer labels are no strangers in many students' closets," said one article from the school newspaper in 2006.

Trachtenberg insists that GW's fiscal strategy uses rich kids to subsidize the education of poor kids—an argument that is common among the leaders of private universities that charge high tuition (NYU's president, John Sexton, says much the same thing). "Some 40 percent of students pay list price," Trachtenberg says. "These are people from wealthy families; I have no compunction about charging them list price. They can afford it." But the school's financial aid numbers make it clear that the picture is a little more complicated.

Many GW students come from families that can't afford high tuition. As a result, students borrow—a lot. The average borrower leaves Foggy Bottom with $31,299 worth of debt, among the highest levels in the country. That's thousands more than the average at nearby Georgetown. Some students, like Greg Godfrey, graduate owing $100,000 or more. The son of a Cleveland single mother, Godfrey spent years living hand to mouth after graduating with a business degree in 2006, and still owes more than $75,000. "You just don't know what you're doing when you sign up for this stuff," Godfrey says.

Nor is it clear that Godfrey and his fellow students got a great long-term investment in return. According to People Capital, an organization that tracks earning potential, a typical GW student (political science major, with average GW SAT scores and a 3.0 college GPA) would have almost exactly the same career earning potential if he attended significantly lower-debt schools like the University of Virginia or the University of Maryland.

If GW puts many of its students in a financially precarious situation, it's worth noting that the school itself shares much the same plight. Like a recent graduate with a crushing loan, GW operates on the fiscal equivalent of paycheck to paycheck, covering nearly 80 percent of annual expenses from tuition revenue—much higher than the 40 percent average among private national research universities. The university generates little revenue from its endowment, and prospects of improving the situation are bleak: only 11 percent of alumni donate, compared to the average among similar universities in the 50 percent range.

Godfrey, for one, doesn't plan to donate to his alma mater anytime soon. While he's now making a decent salary—he recently obtained a job at World Wrestling Entertainment working on digital media products—he still pays some $700 a month to service the loans he accumulated studying at GW. "I mean, maybe if I made like $3 million a year I'd give something to GW," Godfrey jokes.

Meanwhile, despite the high tuition, GW's assault on the upper reaches of higher education status has stalled: the university made it all the way to fifty-first place on the *U.S. News* list in 2004, just short of tier one, but has fallen back a few spots since. GW seems to have found the upper limits of arriviste institution building in higher education. Other striving campuses, including Boston University, Syracuse, Drexel, and Northeastern, have ended up in similar circumstances. The wrappings have become fancier than ever, but the product inside tastes pretty much the same.

The GW institutional model—embracing high tuition, excessive construction projects, and massive undergraduate debt—has become the dominant one in higher education, and every university president seems to want to be Stephen Joel Trachtenberg. American University, for instance, another second-tier school just four and a half miles from GW, does exactly the same things GW does, only more so. The average borrower leaves American about $41,000 in debt. Some 84 percent of American's operating budget is funded by undergraduate tuition. A whole host of second-tier national universities operate in the same manner: they spend on the things that *U.S. News* measures, and they pay for them with practices that *U.S. News* doesn't care about, like student loans.

If GW puts many of its students in a financially precarious situation, the school itself shares much the same plight. Like a recent graduate with a crushing loan, GW operates on the fiscal equivalent of paycheck to paycheck.

It would be one thing if GW and schools like it were trying to break the Ivy League's monopoly on prestige by offering demonstrably better educations. But there's very little evidence that the quality of GW's academic program has risen in step with its tuition rates. When I asked GW if I could see the results of its Collegiate Learning Assessment, a study of institutional academic progress that the Council for Aid to Education, a nonprofit, has carried out at hundreds of schools, the university did not respond. This isn't unusual; most institutions keep their CLA results closely concealed and actively resist efforts to allow consumer comparisons on that basis. But that leaves precious few markers of academic quality by which to measure such schools. GW likes to boast of its impressive network of plugged-in D.C. professionals who serve as adjunct professors. But adjuncts come cheap; they certainly don't justify the university's exorbitant cost. The school's graduation rate is 81 per-

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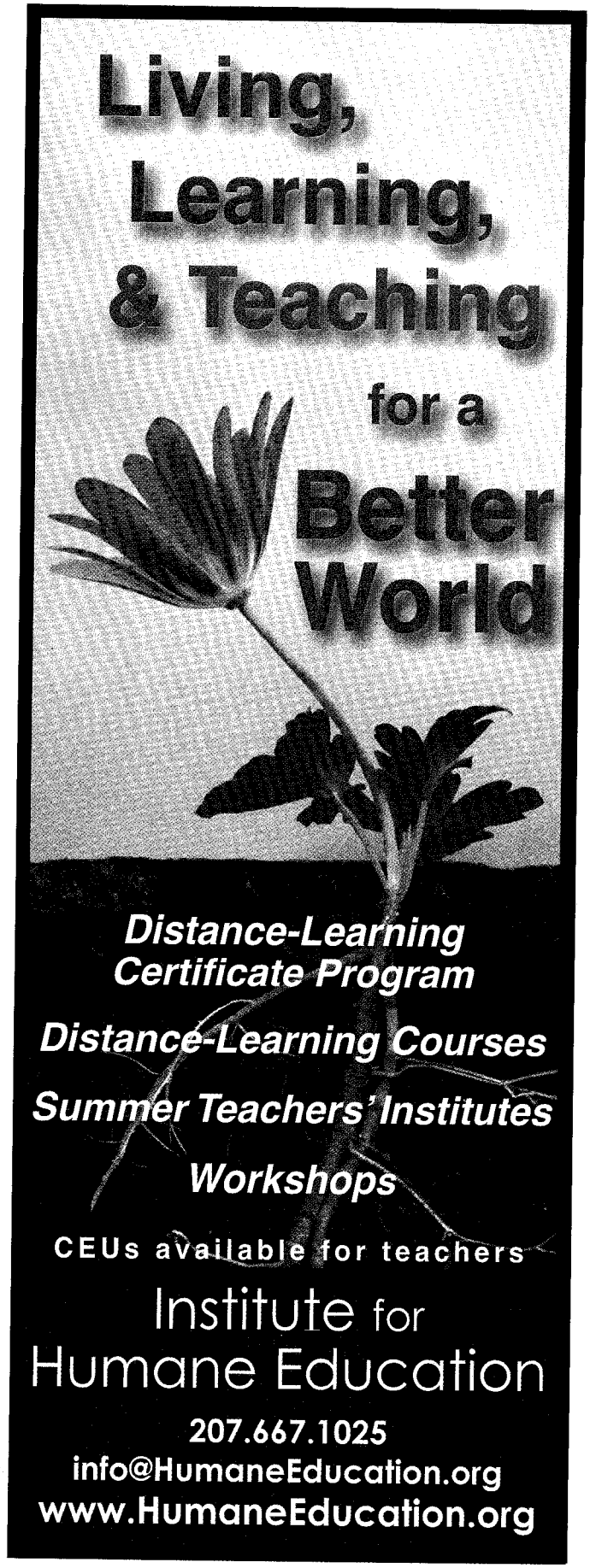

cent—not bad, but not especially good, either, putting it in the same league as much cheaper schools like Virginia Tech and the University of Maryland.

In fact, in a couple of very basic ways, GW may even have gone downhill in the years since it went upmarket. Yezar, the economics professor, says that fewer and fewer courses are taught by tenured professors, and that class sizes have gotten larger over the years. When GW was a cheap school, introductory economics classes had 160 students, he says. Now, despite the new higher tuition costs, they run to 270.

And what of the local constituency of students that GW once served so well? Those students haven't gone away, of course. But they go elsewhere. The Capitol policeman of today doesn't look to the high-toned GW for his degree in public administration or criminal justice. Instead he might look to the for-profit Strayer University, which has five campuses in the D.C. area—all happy to nickel-and-dime him by the course. Indeed, the prodigious rise of the for-profit education sector is arguably just a canny response to higher education's abandonment of Timex students for the Rolex crowd.

None of this is to say that George Washington is a bad school. In all sorts of ways, GW is a fine university, with well-respected law and business schools, an up-and-coming school of international affairs, excellent access to internships and jobs on Capitol Hill, and one of the best student-run newspapers in the country. It also does well in measures prized by the *Washington Monthly*, such as high rates of participation in the Peace Corps.

Moreover, it's possible that GW could one day become a truly top-shelf school. In future years, alumni who are both wealthier and more devoted to their alma mater than past graduates may have the capacity and inclination to give generously, reducing the school's need to rely so overwhelmingly on tuition. But it seems just as likely that GW could turn out to be one more overleveraged artifact of our gilded age. New, more streamlined institutional models could steal into Washington, capitalize on the same geographic advantages, and undercut GW on cost. Or a school with a more established brand name could establish a satellite campus, partner with a major policy organization, and beat GW in prestige. (For a model of how this might work, check out Kevin Carey's "The Mayo Clinic of Higher Ed," page 27.)

But above all, GW seems vulnerable to a potential change in the way we *think* about higher education. What if we actually started measuring how much students learn at their colleges and universities? How would that change the competition among institutions? Would the schools with the blue-chip price tags and high average debt loads fall from the top ranks? Would it spell an end to the era in which a forbidding set of entrance standards and a few stone facades are enough to tell us that a school is doing a great job? Let's hope so. It would be great if more universities competed to be excellent. What we have now is schools that spend a lot of money—students' money, taxpayers' money—merely to look that way. WM

Daniel Luzer is web editor of the *Washington Monthly* and writes the magazine's higher education blog, College Guide.

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AMERICA'S BEST COMMUNITY COLLEGES

What fifty little-known two-year schools can teach the rest of American higher education.

By Kevin Carey

On July 14, 2009, President Obama stood on an outdoor stage at Macomb Community College in suburban Detroit. In the crowd below local dignitaries mingled with students and former autoworkers. Obama had campaigned at Macomb during the presidential election and was returning to announce the signature higher education effort of his administration: the American Graduation Initiative.

The goal, Obama said, was for America to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, a lead it had long held before falling behind other Western industrialized countries in recent years. To accomplish this, he promised to invest an unprecedented $12 billion to rebuild crumbling community college facilities, increase the number of two-year students who graduate and transfer to four-year schools, improve remedial education, forge stronger ties between colleges and employers, and create inexpensive, open-source courses for students to take online. It would be, he said, the most historic effort on behalf of community colleges since President Roosevelt signed the GI Bill.

A year later, the American Graduation Initiative is in ruins. While the administration convinced Congress this past March to take tens of billions of dollars in government subsidies away from the for-profit student loan industry and use the money to increase Pell Grants for low-income students, last-minute wrangling with conservative Democrats in the Senate gutted the graduation initiative, removing most of the programs and funding that might have helped more students earn degrees. Community colleges were left with a $2 billion Department of Labor career training program and a White House summit as consolation prizes. Further funding is unlikely.

Nevertheless, in the course of his Macomb speech, Obama made a key statement that should continue to guide his administration: we must "measure what works and what doesn't" in community colleges. "All too often," the president said, "we don't know what happens when somebody walks out of a classroom and onto the factory floor or into the laboratory or the office. And that means businesses often can't be sure what a degree is really worth. And schools themselves don't have the facts to make informed choices about which programs achieve results and which programs don't."

Obama was right to call for more research about what works. But there's a lot we already know. Since 2001, a nonprofit organization called the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, based at the University of Texas, Austin, has been gathering information about which commu-

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TOP 50 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

	Active and collaborative learning	Student effort	Academic challenge	Student-faculty interaction	Support for learning	Four-year graduation rate
1. Saint Paul College (MN)	83.2	72.2	63.7	71.0	71.8	41%
2. Hesston College (KS)	65.3	52.8	65.3	63.0	65.4	63%
3. Carolinas College of Health Sciences (NC)	54.0	52.8	66.7	61.2	64.1	61%
4. Mayland Community College (NC)	57.8	54.3	54.3	59.0	60.2	71%
5. Itasca Community College (MN)	66.8	58.8	57.8	60.3	58.7	38%
6. Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WI)	60.4	53.2	58.2	57.9	52.6	57%
7. Leech Lake Tribal College (MN)	69.3	51.8	53.3	65.1	55.6	38%
8. Alexandria Technical College (MN)	60.8	52.8	55.4	57.7	52.3	57%
9. Southwestern Community College (NC)	57.1	56.6	54.0	61.3	59.3	54%
10. Chippewa Valley Technical College (WI)	55.9	49.1	54.2	55.1	44.7	75%
11. Washington County Community College District (ME)	58.8	55.2	51.6	58.2	54.9	53%
12. Georgia Military College—Milledgeville (GA)	54.4	55.3	51.9	53.0	58.3	62%
13. Umpqua Community College (OR)	63.7	59.4	65.0	61.7	49.8	21%
14. Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College (WV)	58.8	54.7	59.7	58.5	57.5	37%
15. Western Wyoming Community College (WY)	53.3	52.1	49.8	55.9	52.8	67%
16. New Mexico State University—Grants (NM)	59.0	56.0	55.7	61.4	57.8	35%
17. Tacoma Community College (WA)	54.3	53.0	53.0	49.9	50.8	63%
18. Hazard Community and Technical College (KY)	57.3	59.7	60.5	62.3	59.9	23%
19. Skagit Valley College (WA)	58.3	53.0	53.7	56.6	52.1	45%
20. Alabama Southern Community College (AL)	53.4	60.2	51.6	55.9	56.3	47%
21. Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (NC)	49.7	47.5	46.7	48.2	48.1	83%
22. North Country Community College (NY)	50.9	54.3	53.5	57.6	49.5	57%
23. North Central Missouri College (MO)	56.8	58.0	51.4	56.1	53.8	43%
24. Hawaii Community College (HI)	62.6	53.1	58.2	57.1	56.3	24%
25. Halifax Community College (NC)	54.0	60.6	57.2	58.4	60.4	31%
26. Lake City Community College (FL)	53.3	53.4	54.8	56.2	53.9	48%
27. Frank Phillips College (TX)	57.2	50.9	48.8	55.5	52.3	51%
28. Texas State Technical College—West Texas (TX)	58.9	55.3	55.3	59.7	56.4	29%
29. Green River Community College (WA)	59.8	56.2	54.0	53.2	54.6	35%
30. Minnesota West—Pipestone (MN)	51.5	56.9	55.7	56.4	52.3	47%
31. North Florida Community College (FL)	55.5	50.3	54.4	60.8	57.9	37%
32. Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (KY)	56.6	54.9	50.9	57.3	58.4	38%
33. Seward County Community College/Area Technical School (KS)	50.0	51.6	48.5	50.2	57.2	63%
34. West Hills College—NDC (CA)	60.2	56.7	53.9	52.3	62.3	26%
35. Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (NM)	61.0	66.4	55.2	55.4	57.4	16%
36. Morgan Community College (CO)	54.6	53.4	51.3	56.9	56.2	43%
37. MSCTC—Fergus Falls (MN)	54.8	54.9	57.8	53.9	51.2	40%
38. Patrick Henry Community College (VA)	58.3	56.5	54.4	60.1	60.1	23%
39. Lawson State Community College (AL)	59.1	54.0	58.1	56.3	57.6	24%
40. Corning Community College (NY)	54.7	52.2	57.0	56.8	56.0	36%
41. Texas State Technical College—Waco (TX)	50.0	40.4	43.0	49.1	51.5	82%
42. Northampton Community College (PA)	54.7	53.7	54.3	52.9	52.1	44%
43. Vermilion Community College (MN)	56.4	53.0	53.7	59.0	55.1	34%
44. Monroe Community College (NY)	50.6	51.4	51.4	53.2	51.1	57%
45. De Anza College (CA)	52.6	50.4	52.1	46.3	47.5	61%
46. Cleveland Community College (NC)	54.0	50.2	49.8	49.3	51.1	55%
47. Maysville Community and Technical College (KY)	54.5	52.8	53.0	61.1	53.7	35%
48. Atlanta Technical College (GA)	54.3	54.4	55.2	51.8	61.8	33%
49. Central Carolina Community College (NC)	48.2	52.8	52.9	54.9	54.1	52%
50. Barton County Community College (KS)	45.7	49.7	49.6	49.2	52.2	70%

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nity colleges do the best job of adopting institutional practices and encouraging student habits that years of research have shown to be strongly correlated with higher levels of learning. CCSSE has surveyed hundreds of thousands of students at over two-thirds of all community colleges in America about practices including the number of books and papers assigned, the frequency of group assignments, the amount of student interaction with faculty, hours spent preparing for class, and the quality of support services. Unlike similar surveys conducted for four-year colleges and universities, all CCSSE results are published on a Web site (www.ccsse.org) for anyone to see.

In 2007, *Washington Monthly* combined CCSSE results with graduation rates published by the U.S. Department of Education to create the first-ever list of America's best community colleges. This year, we have updated the list with all-new CCSSE data (see "A Note on Methodology," page 51), ranking more than 650 community colleges nationwide in order to identify the fifty best community colleges of 2010. As usual, they're all over the map: there's a small, science-oriented tribal college in New Mexico (at number thirty-five), a job-focused technical institute in rural Hazard County, Kentucky (number eighteen), a midsized suburban college in Washington State that prepares students to transfer to four-year universities (number seventeen), and a college built on the rainy side of an island paradise (number twenty-four). Many of the 2007 colleges reappear on this year's list, underscoring the reliability of the CCSSE survey. Others stand out for the first time.

Here are some things we learned from these schools:

Selectivity Does Not Equal Excellence

It is commonly accepted that the colleges with the toughest admissions standards are the most excellent. Since community colleges don't have admissions standards, many of us discount the idea of excellence in the two-year sector. Community colleges are supposed to be substandard, the thinking goes—somewhere you go if a four-year college won't have you. To get a great education, you need to go to a famous university.

The list of America's best community colleges proves this notion wrong. While all the schools on it are inexpensive, have open admissions, and are largely unknown outside their local communities, they stand out in teaching and helping students earn degrees. When it comes to quality of instruction they outperform not only their two-year peers, but many elite four-year research universities as well. As the table on page 50 shows, students at the top community colleges are more likely than their research university peers to get prompt feedback from instructors, work with other students on projects in class, make class presentations, and contribute to class discussions. Research universities too often subordinate teaching to research. At the best community colleges, teaching comes first.

So uncelebrated are America's best community colleges that one thing the top ones tend to have in common is an underappreciation of just how good they are. That's what we found when we visited the number one institution, Saint Paul College, in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. (For more information about Saint Paul College, see Erin Carlyle, "Shakespeare with Power Tools," page 52.)

Money Isn't Everything

Community colleges receive far less funding per student than do four-year institutions. This is despite the fact that they are more likely than four-year institutions to enroll students who delay entry to college, have jobs and families, receive a substandard high school education, and struggle economically. In a just world, they would be funded more generously, not less, than four-year schools to compensate for the more difficult job they do.

When it comes to quality of instruction, the best community colleges outperform not only their two-year peers, but many elite four-year research universities as well. Research universities too often subordinate teaching to research. At the best community colleges, teaching comes first.

But, while community colleges could benefit greatly from more resources (and Congress was shortsighted to eviscerate their funding), the schools on our top fifty list do markedly better than their peers in making the best of the dollars they get. Also, while the top fifty schools devote slightly more per student ($12,903) than the average for community colleges we ranked ($11,045), the amount of money they spend isn't determinative. Nine of the top community colleges spend less than $10,000 per student. For instance, Saint Paul's spending is below average. The right leadership, organizational culture, and approach to teaching can make a big and immediate difference, even when colleges and students lack all the resources they need.

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TABLE 1: SELECT QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU DONE THE FOLLOWING:	Percent who responded "Often" or "Very Often"		
	Top 50 community colleges	Average for all community colleges surveyed	Average for freshmen at top-tier research universities
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions?	70%	65%	52%
Made a class presentation?	33%	28%	23%
Worked with other students on projects during class?	53%	46%	40%
Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance?	61%	57%	53%
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations?	55%	50%	53%
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor?	53%	46%	46%
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class?	21%	16%	18%

Make It Harder and More Will Graduate

Some colleges allege that poor graduation rates are an unavoidable—even laudable—consequence of maintaining high academic standards. But CCSSE researchers have found the opposite to be true. The higher the level of "Academic Challenge"—one of the five CCSSE measures that contribute to our rankings—the more likely students are to earn degrees, even after controlling for student preparation.

At Hesston College in Kansas (number two on our list), 63 percent of students report having to write eleven or more papers during the school year. At the average community college, only 26 percent of students report such workloads. At Hesston, 85 percent of students report being assigned five or more textbooks during the year. Nationwide, only 55 percent of students at community colleges report such levels of assignment. Nevertheless, Hesston graduates nearly two-thirds of its students in four years, far above the national average of 28 percent.

The best community colleges have found that when you set high expectations, students will live up to them—even when those students face barriers to graduation. Indeed, the top fifty community colleges enroll a *higher* percentage of students with Pell Grants (46 percent) than the average (41 percent) for the more than 600 colleges we ranked.

We believe that ranking community colleges is important. Nearly half of all American students begin their college careers at two-year institutions. But unlike in the four-year sector, students don't compete to get into community colleges, and community colleges don't compete in a national market for students. So there is little demand for national rankings of the kind published annually by *U.S. News & World Report*—and by the *Monthly* elsewhere in these pages. That means that students, educators, and policymakers have no comparable, consumer-friendly information when evaluating two-year schools.

Also, it's essential to learn from the best. As President Obama noted in his speech, most community college students never graduate or transfer to a four-year school. This represents a huge loss of potential. Community colleges have the toughest job in higher education, teaching academically and financially challenged students with a fraction of the resources given to four-year institutions. That makes it essential to spotlight the schools that have surmounted these challenges and served their students well.

Of course, our rankings aren't perfect. Like the president, we wish we knew how community college graduates fare in the job market and their future careers. We'd like to know if students who transfer to four-year schools get good grades, earn bachelor's degrees, and go on to graduate and professional schools. It would help to have more objective measures of learning outcomes of the kind pioneered by nonprofit research organizations like the Collegiate Learning Assessment, which measures higher-order analytic, communication, and critical-thinking skills. The more we know about community college excellence, the better the case for investing in the best institutions and holding the rest accountable for improvement.

But that's all the more reason why the Obama administration should make the president's call for more research and data into learning outcomes central to its future community college strategy. Information is cheap, in the grand scheme of things, and we still know far too little about the colleges that educate nearly half of all college students. In exchange for new federal funding, community colleges should expand their already laudable commitment to transparency. In higher education, more knowledge isn't too much to ask. WM

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A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY: COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The *Washington Monthly* ranking of America's best community colleges is based on two sources of information: the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and graduation rates published by the U.S. Department of Education.

The CCSSE survey is managed by a nonprofit organization of the same name housed at the University of Texas at Austin. The survey is given to a representative sample of students at community colleges that voluntarily choose to participate. Since 2003, CCSSE has been administered to 68 percent of all community colleges in America. All CCSSE results are published on the organization's Web site, www.ccsse.org.

Because most community colleges do not administer the survey every year, we combined results from the three most recent available years: 2007, 2008, and 2009. For colleges that participated more than once, we used the most recent year. More than 60 percent of all community colleges—roughly 650 institutions—were included in the rankings, from which we published the top fifty.

The CCSSE survey is comprised of 104 questions on a range of topics including teaching practices, student workload, interaction with faculty, and student support. CCSSE combines the results of those questions into aggregate "benchmark" scores in five categories: "Active and Collaborative Learning," "Student Effort," "Academic Challenge," "Student-Faculty Interaction," and "Support for Learners." The benchmark scores are standardized to range from 0 to 100 with an average score of 50.

CCSSE has published research examining the relationship between student responses on the survey and those students' likelihood of succeeding in college, as measured by outcomes such as grades, credit attainment, dropout rates, and graduation rates. Even after controlling for student factors like race, income, gender, and prior academic achievement, the research found that all five benchmarks are positively correlated with student success. However, the degree of correlation was not identical. Some practices matter more than others. Accordingly, we gave more weight in our rankings to the more important practices. Eighty-five percent of each college's ranking is based on its CCSSE benchmark scores, weighted as follows:

Active and Collaborative Learning: 29%
Student Effort: 12%
Academic Challenge: 19%
Student-Faculty Interaction: 14%
Support for Learners: 12%

These weights (which do not sum to 85 percent due to rounding) were based on the number and strength of statistically significant correlations between CCSSE benchmarks and various student outcomes in three separate studies published by CCSSE. The weights represent the *Washington Monthly*'s interpretation of CCSSE research. While CCSSE constructed the benchmark measures to facilitate comparison among institutions, it does not endorse the use of its data for rankings.

As with any sample-based survey, CCSSE results have statistical margins of error. Readers should be mindful of this when interpreting the rankings, particularly when differences between colleges are small.

The remaining 15 percent of each college's ranking is based on graduation rates submitted by colleges to the U.S. Department of Education. In our 2007 version of America's best community colleges, we used three-year graduation rates (the percentage of students who graduate within three years of enrolling for the first time as freshmen). Subsequently, the U.S. Department of Education has published four-year graduation rates. Because many community college students take longer than three years to graduate, we used four-year graduation rates for this year's rankings.

Federal graduation rate measures do not include students who enroll part-time and do not give colleges credit for students who take longer than four years to graduate, or who transfer to another college without earning a degree. However, research published by the Community College Research Center at Columbia University Teachers College has found that when part-time students are included in graduation rates and colleges are given credit for transfers and long-term graduates, their ranking positions relative to one another are similar to rankings produced using U.S. Department of Education measures. Therefore, we believe federal graduation rates are valid for ranking purposes. —*Eds.*

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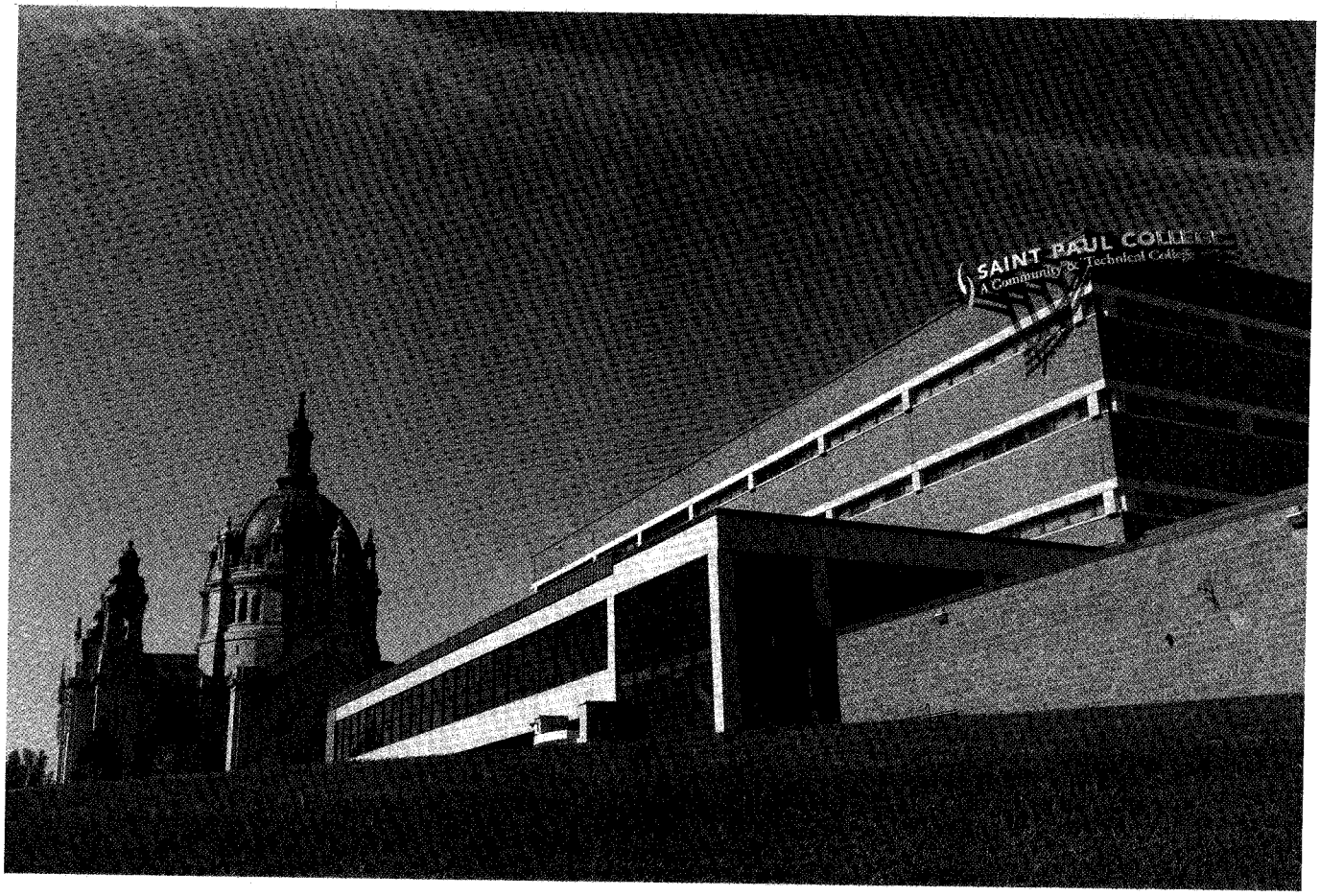

Best of both worlds: Saint Paul College combines the virtues of technical education with those of the liberal arts.

courtesy Saint Paul College

SHAKESPEARE WITH POWER TOOLS

How a humble trade school became the best community college in America.

By Erin Carlyle

Hector Caballero Jr., husband and father of two, spent a decade working at Walgreens before he was finally ready for college. In 2007, he enrolled at a local four-year university near his home in St. Paul, Minnesota, to study business. But things didn't go so well. The classes were too easy. The teachers didn't seem that knowledgeable. Hector became frustrated and began asking around for help. A cousin recommended another local school.

This college was different. Hector's business classes were supplemented with challenging courses in writing, science, and speech. His composition instructors taught him to use multiple sources and how to evaluate their credibility. Hector had never done that before. "I was naive," he says.

Hector even started changing the way he consumed the news, applying a newfound level of critical thinking to the broadcasts of Fox, CNN, MSNBC, and sparring viewpoints on the Internet. "I started comparing how things are presented," he says.

Inculcating such habits of skeptical citizenship is a classic mission of the liberal arts. But it's not the kind of thing most people expect from a little-known two-year

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trade school like Saint Paul College, where Hector is a student. Saint Paul—which puts to shame the idea that trade schools are for people who are good with their hands, not their heads—beat out hundreds of other schools nationwide to top this year's *Washington Monthly* list of America's best community colleges. The educators there know that whether you're an auto mechanic or a sociologist, you need to learn how to think and how to learn, because most of your future jobs probably haven't been invented yet. Saint Paul also shows that technical education has a lot to teach the liberal arts. The collaborative, interactive teaching methods that the best technical schools employ every day turn out to be, in many cases, just what the liberal arts have been missing.

Saint Paul College was founded one hundred years ago by the Saint Paul Builders Exchange as a vocational high school. Builders sat on the school's board and made sure the curriculum matched the school's early motto: "It always pays to learn a trade."

In 1990, Donovan Schwichtenberg became president of Saint Paul Technical and Vocational Institute. He was hired to set the school's finances straight, and there was fear that he might clean house and replace veteran staffers with his own people. But Schwichtenberg had always found that kind of leadership arrogant. An earnest and affable career educator, he's active in his local Rotary Club and keeps bees at a family farm. "I believe you come into a situation and you value what is there and you look for the good things and you build on that," he says.

Schwichtenberg built on the school's strengths, expanding the facilities and the curriculum. He created a new facility on campus to help veterans attending college and received an award from the Defense Department for supporting employees who participate in the National Guard and Army Reserve.

Then, about five years after settling into the presidency, Schwichtenberg stumbled across a statistic that set his brain on overdrive. "There were 20,000 households in the St. Paul area that did not have access to an automobile," he recalls. "And there's no other public two-year college in St. Paul." Schwichtenberg realized that it would be nearly impossible for these households to get to an affordable liberal arts school—especially in Minnesota's snow and ice.

So Schwichtenberg decided to add a liberal arts track. It wasn't easy—the old guard pushed back. They were afraid that if the curriculum expanded, the trades would lose their clout. But Schwichtenberg persevered. In 2002, the college formally changed its name to "Saint Paul College—A Community & Technical College." The last part was added to underscore the ongoing importance of the trades. Today, Saint Paul offers sixty-one occupational degree programs, an associate of arts degree in liberal arts, and several two-year programs designed to lead directly into the state's four-year universities.

When Schwichtenberg set to hiring professors for the new liberal arts programs, he found that the old and the new were far more compatible than anyone at the school could have predicted. In fact, Saint Paul's culture of teaching the trades matched everything researchers were saying about how liberal arts students learn best.

For centuries, vocational educations have relied very successfully on the apprenticeship model: the disciple practices the conventions of the trade under the guidance of the master. Learning is hands-on, with intense interaction between student and teacher. Technical schools, too, have generally hewed to this model.

On the other hand, four-year colleges like the one Hector first attended have traditionally used a very different model of education: the lecture, which is inexpensive and, at its best, stimulating. But lecture halls can also easily become dull places where learning goes to die.

In the 1980s and '90s, educational research started to take notice of what the trade schools were already doing so effectively. People learn more when teaching is "active and collaborative," research found, when students engage with the material, work with one another, and strive to solve problems rather than absorb information passively through a lecture. The more direct interaction with faculty and practical application of classroom concepts, the better.

The lesson Saint Paul teaches—not just to its students, but to everyone—is that excellence isn't limited to the relative handful of colleges that can afford to pick their students. When it comes to teaching, any college can be great.

That's why the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), a nonprofit organization based at the University of Texas, surveys hundreds of community colleges every year to see how well they encourage things like group projects, class presentations, and interaction with faculty in and out of the classroom. It's also why CCSSE results make up the bulk of *Washington Monthly*'s community college rankings.

For trade school educators, the revelation was nothing new. "The technical college faculty were saying, 'What's

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the big deal? We've been doing that for centuries,'" recalls Leslie Mercer, associate vice chancellor for research, planning, and effectiveness in Minnesota's public higher education system. A trade school by tradition and a liberal arts college by choice, Saint Paul has demonstrated an uncanny flair for putting these state-of-the-art pedagogical ideas into practice.

The ethos starts with the way students and faculty interact. About two-thirds of Saint Paul students are either first-generation college-goers, of color, from low-income families, or some combination of the three. Many are immigrants, reflecting the area's high concentration of Somalis and Hmong. Students like that tend to drown in impersonal lectures. So Saint Paul classes are small, averaging nineteen students. Teachers roam the rooms, providing guidance as students work on individual assignments and group projects. "You have to be approachable," says Penny Starkey, a chemistry instructor, "willing to work closely with students."

Educators at Saint Paul College know that whether you're an auto mechanic or a sociologist, you need to know how to think and how to learn—because most of your future jobs probably haven't been invented yet.

Rather than holding limited office hours and then retreating to their homes, teachers are regularly on campus with their office doors wide open. It's not uncommon for instructors to give out their cell phone numbers and take calls and answer e-mails on weekends. Dan Paulnock, a popular speech teacher who has won several teaching awards, gives students a personal guarantee. "I tell my students that they have a lifetime warranty on my teaching," he says. "I give them my cell phone number on my syllabus. And they can call that cell phone number at any time, as long as it's not eleven at night or seven in the morning. I get calls constantly."

Of course, all colleges have some inspiring teachers. What the CCSSE data show is how widespread effective teaching practices have become at Saint Paul College compared to the norm. For example, nearly all of the students surveyed at Saint Paul said they had discussed ideas or readings from class with their instructors outside of class time. At most two-year schools, close to half of the students never do this.

The interaction between faculty and students isn't limited to academic pursuits—the college also encourages extracurricular activities and service projects that help students feel like they are part of a real community, not just a commuter school. Timothy Strand, a veteran carpenter, spends a huge amount of time with his students. "Especially in the trades, we're with them from seven or eight in the morning till two in the afternoon," Strand says. "We're their mentor, their counselor—we help them solve problems." That role extends out into the neighborhood as well: every year, Strand and his students remodel homes for a nonprofit that serves severely disabled people. "The halls have to be widened, the doors have to be widened, we put in special bathtubs," Strand says. "We do one to five houses a year for them—whatever they need."

Again, this kind of experience is the norm. Ninety-three percent of Saint Paul students work with their instructors on activities other than coursework. Nationwide, about 70 percent of students at two-year schools say that they never do this. Ninety-eight percent of Saint Paul students say they've taught or tutored other students. Less than one-third of students nationwide have had the same experience.

Among the more than 650 community colleges nationwide surveyed by CCSSE, Saint Paul scored highest on "Active and Collaborative Learning." In the trade classes at Saint Paul, welders join pieces of metal and culinary arts students prepare meals. In science courses, students build models of the endocrine system and chart the readings of an EKG. Hands-on projects are such a part of school culture that every year the school holds an arts and sciences fair. Ninety-eight percent of students say they've worked together on projects outside of class. Nationally, only about 60 percent of students at two-year schools say this. Saint Paul students have a distinct edge in this equation: the modern workplace is rarely solitary, and employers value people who know how to work in teams.

No rules at Saint Paul dictate how many projects teachers must assign, or how they must run their classrooms. But the college does have a strong set of expectations and policies that reinforce this kind of teaching. The administration gives awards to teachers who come up with innovative new classroom methods, and the teachers control a staff development fund to pay for ongoing education. An internal Center for Teaching and Learning helps instructors improve their skills. And the school has veteran teachers mentor new ones, so they can pass on the shared educational values of the school.

All of these practices at Saint Paul have a purpose: to turn out students who can think critically in the best tradition of the liberal arts. Compared to other community colleges, the instructors at Saint Paul spend more time teaching students to evaluate and synthesize information, make

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judgments about it, and apply concepts to perform new skills. This is as true in vocational classes as it is in the traditional liberal arts disciplines. After all, in a fast-changing economy, the specific skills you learn in college might be obsolete in five or ten years. Students who are adept at learning and adapting won't need retraining down the line.

That's why Strand, the carpentry instructor, spends a lot of time showing his students photographs of commercial architecture in places like sandy Dubai—which arguably has nothing to do with the kind of work they'll do in snowy St. Paul, Minnesota. This is important, he says, because the construction trade changes so quickly—students need to be able to spot trends and possibilities in order to be leaders in their field. "I've just got to open up their minds and show them, wow, what's going on," he says. "Expand their horizons and open up their minds to think about the future."

In this way, Saint Paul hasn't just brought the hands-on ethos and intense student-faculty interaction of the trades to the liberal arts. It's brought the critical thinking and wide perspective of the liberal arts to the trades.

For most community colleges, guiding students all the way to a degree is a major problem—less than a quarter of full-time students graduate in three years. Saint Paul's graduation rate of 41 percent is well above the national average. This is another reason Saint Paul sits atop *Washington Monthly*'s rankings, which give 15 percent weight to graduation rates. The college's "Power of You" program offers free tuition to graduates of St. Paul's public schools. (The program was initially funded by foundations and corporate donors, and now the school has picked up the tab with hopes that the state eventually will.) Students in the program have access to counselors called "retention specialists," whose job is to help them if they run into academic trouble. Through Saint Paul's "early alert" system, teachers can send the retention specialists an online alert when they notice a student struggling. Retention specialists then get in touch with the student and try to sort it out. The program received an award from the state and is being copied at other schools in Minnesota.

"Our population is extremely diverse, a high proportion of immigration students—disadvantaged, underrepresented, urban, and gritty," says Thomas Matos, director of student services. "There are expectations that the assumptions have to be lower. What Saint Paul College has done is said, 'You know what, our expectations have to be high. You have to work for the grades you get in the classroom.' And then we work to give them the services that support them."

Saint Paul isn't wealthy—per-student spending is below average compared to the hundreds of colleges in the CCSSE survey. Its students face the same challenges that community colleges contend with nationwide. The lesson it teaches—not just to its students, but to everyone—is that excellence isn't limited to the relative handful of colleges that can afford to pick their students. When it comes to teaching, any college can be great.

That's good news for students like Corey Sass. A high school football standout, Sass was recruited to play running back at the University of Minnesota's Crookston campus. Academics weren't exactly high on his mind, and at first, that didn't seem to be a problem. His coaches picked his classes around his workout schedule, and they didn't really talk much about academics. The message was clear: school didn't really matter as long as he played well.

So when Sass failed out and lost his scholarship, he felt betrayed by his coaches. "I guess I felt like maybe they should have done a little more to make sure I was getting my classes done."

Compared to other community colleges, the instructors at Saint Paul spend more time teaching students to synthesize information, make judgments about it, and apply concepts to new skills. This is as true in vocational classes as it is in the traditional liberal arts disciplines.

Sass worked for a number of years in construction before he was ready to continue his education. At Saint Paul College, he has thrived. His first classes, in art history and speech, helped him discover a new dimension of his own interests and capabilities. "I did well, and that gave me confidence," he says.

Now, Sass has completed the one-year diploma in carpentry—and along the way he's discovered he loves learning. One day he hopes to run his own construction company. He knows he won't be able to swing a hammer forever, so he plans to continue on with his bachelor's degree—or maybe more.

"I love going to school," he says. "I joke around with my friends that I want to be a carpenter with a PhD." WM

Erin Carlyle is a reporter in Minnesota.

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AMERICA'S BEST MASTER'S UNIVERSITIES AND BACCALAUREATE COLLEGES

By Erin Dillon

In 1852, four French Marianist missionaries arrived by stagecoach in San Antonio, Texas, and founded a school called the St. Mary's Institute, hoping to "regenerate the people" through education. The school, now St. Mary's University, has been steadfastly serving the citizens of San Antonio ever since: 69 percent of St. Mary's students are Latino, 53 percent receive Pell Grants, and many are the first in their family to attend college. Unlike most colleges with similar demographics, which often struggle with student retention, St. Mary's graduates nearly 60 percent of its students. Graduates of its School of Science, Engineering and Technology boast a 50 percent acceptance rate when applying to medical or dental school, whereas the average acceptance rate of all students applying to medical and dental school is 35 percent. And St. Mary's ranks sixth nationally in generating Mexican American applicants to medical school—supplying the same number as Stanford University, an elite institution with an undergraduate student body almost three times as big.

And yet, there's a good chance you've never heard of St. Mary's if you're not from Texas or aren't focused on the world of Catholic higher ed. Despite all that it does well, St. Mary's has several things working against it when it comes to shining nationally. For one thing, the school is designated by the nonprofit Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a "master's university," a classification encompassing schools that offer a range of undergraduate and some master's-level programs, but few doctoral degrees. That obliges any organization that ranks schools based on Carnegie's widely followed classification scheme—as do *U.S. News* and the *Washington Monthly*—to evaluate master's universities in a separate category, which makes it unclear how the best of them compete with national universities and liberal arts colleges.

(continued on page 61)

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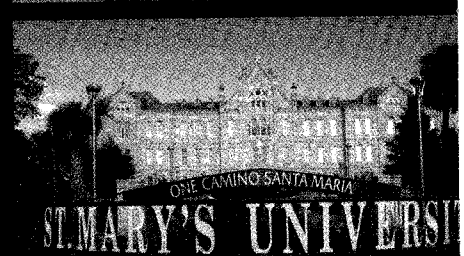
Mission in action.

With an educational mission of academic excellence, service to society, civic engagement and improving the world for the common good, St. Mary's undergraduates stay busy…mentoring school kids, revitalizing the neighborhood, registering citizens to vote, conducting drives to collect food and toys, building homes for disadvantaged families at home and around the country, and so much more…volunteering nearly 140,000 hours of service annually.

By the way, their graduation rate is among the highest at Texas colleges and universities.

Students at St. Mary's practice what we teach.



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TOP 50 MASTER'S UNIVERSITIES

*Public institution

			SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH		SERVICE				
		OVERALL SCORE	% students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in thousands (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
1.	St. Mary's University (TX)	100	53	45/59	14 (43)	623 (167)	18	261	28	34 (22)	11	45
2.	Creighton University (NE)	99	17	69/76	7 (140)	28374 (6)	24	43	55	12 (284)	21	12
3.	Trinity University (TX)	90	10	78/81	3 (222)	1244 (130)	1	4	403	10 (352)	78	190
4.	Hamline University (MN)	89	25	59/71	12 (63)	0 (219)	5	8	233	17 (160)	26	185
5.	Le Moyne College (NY)	85	32	54/78	24 (6)	0 (219)	29	76	191	36 (15)	27	101
6.	Truman State University (MO)*	84	16	74/69	-5 (391)	593 (172)	4	6	66	7 (484)	94	105
7.	SUNY at Geneseo (NY)*	82	12	79/78	-1 (310)	1743 (109)	11	11	378	27 (55)	59	146
8.	Mary Baldwin College (VA)	81	31	50/74	24 (8)	0 (219)	59	181	14	42 (10)	177	67
9.	Loyola College in Maryland (MD)	80	9	70/86	16 (32)	1373 (120)	14	36	54	8 (438)	52	28
10.	Villanova University (PA)	80	9	80/89	9 (101)	10473 (25)	31	106	25	16 (182)	117	147
11.	University of Portland (OR)	77	14	69/72	3 (223)	887 (147)	154	1	10	27 (58)	62	78
12.	Xavier University (OH)	77	13	67/79	12 (64)	0 (219)	40	53	30	11 (319)	47	3
13.	Valparaiso University (IN)	77	21	63/75	12 (65)	763 (156)	12	15	130	10 (344)	80	181
14.	University of Scranton (PA)	77	14	63/81	18 (19)	600 (171)	41	161	29	15 (192)	23	19
15.	John Carroll University (OH)	76	25	57/80	23 (12)	298 (207)	36	65	77	8 (442)	84	22
16.	Gannon University (PA)	75	33	50/64	14 (39)	0 (219)	49	168	44	23 (83)	15	64
17.	Gonzaga University (WA)	75	12	69/81	12 (55)	0 (219)	92	5	37	18 (145)	76	41
18.	University of Redlands (CA)	75	17	65/75	10 (89)	1206 (132)	57	7	326	29 (42)	60	65
19.	University of Mary Washington (VA)*	74	9	71/77	6 (161)	0 (219)	13	2	238	21 (106)	200	149
20.	Alfred University (NY)	73	28	59/67	8 (115)	5474 (52)	3	71	361	7 (505)	223	219
21.	Canisius College (NY)	73	29	57/68	11 (82)	163 (215)	21	381	34	10 (341)	37	74
22.	California State University—Fresno (CA)*	72	47	37/48	11 (77)	5297 (55)	261	297	169	53 (6)	9	81
23.	Stetson University (FL)	72	18	60/67	7 (145)	0 (219)	20	139	74	11 (310)	7	36
24.	Rollins College (FL)	71	15	68/69	1 (273)	0 (219)	26	67	403	15 (189)	18	5
25.	New Mex. Inst. of Mining and Tech. (NM)*	70	23	66/48	-18 (512)	83742 (1)	2	73	403	12 (268)	223	219
26.	St. Mary's College of California (CA)	70	24	56/65	9 (108)	0 (219)	48	70	217	32 (29)	82	23
27.	Rochester Institute of Technology (NY)	68	27	66/62	-4 (372)	20961 (12)	197	211	89	19 (129)	42	174
28.	James Madison University (VA)*	68	9	66/82	16 (31)	5455 (53)	52	49	76	25 (69)	75	193
29.	Rutgers University—Camden (NJ)*	67	53	48/58	10 (90)	9370 (28)	55	312	323	13 (250)	223	219
30.	King's College (PA)	67	27	50/73	23 (10)	0 (219)	159	147	52	10 (372)	13	11
31.	College of New Jersey (NJ)*	67	15	73/85	12 (71)	688 (161)	34	105	236	7 (482)	89	63
32.	Hampton University (VA)	67	31	53/51	-2 (342)	24017 (10)	63	381	17	7 (485)	223	219
33.	Humboldt State University (CA)*	67	33	50/42	-8 (439)	7087 (41)	23	12	403	10 (362)	71	123
34.	Xavier University of Louisiana (LA)	66	60	37/35	-2 (338)	4394 (63)	10	381	87	1 (549)	223	219
35.	Baldwin-Wallace College (OH)	66	26	57/73	16 (27)	0 (219)	25	214	403	13 (249)	48	89
36.	Hood College (MD)	66	19	57/65	8 (119)	0 (219)	8	20	51	10 (380)	223	219
37.	Otterbein College (OH)	66	29	53/64	11 (75)	0 (219)	103	75	263	21 (99)	51	4
38.	North Carolina Central University (NC)*	66	64	24/48	24 (7)	4337 (64)	163	350	294	17 (155)	40	145
39.	Harding University (AR)	66	23	63/61	-2 (331)	0 (219)	15	165	403	7 (507)	17	53
40.	University of Dallas (TX)	65	21	69/57	-12 (481)	0 (219)	7	32	151	23 (81)	223	219
41.	University of Northern Iowa (IA)*	65	22	58/63	5 (185)	3455 (74)	132	118	198	36 (18)	31	20
42.	Grambling State University (LA)*	65	74	25/36	11 (74)	428 (190)	178	332	36	4 (548)	38	172
43.	Saint Bonaventure University (NY)	65	28	53/70	17 (24)	0 (219)	22	113	40	17 (159)	223	219
44.	Alcorn State University (MS)*	65	67	27/39	12 (56)	9056 (32)	150	274	23	8 (437)	223	219
45.	Bradley University (IL)	64	18	63/78	15 (34)	1860 (105)	33	55	246	12 (266)	81	211
46.	Southern Illinois Univ. Edwardsville (IL)*	63	24	54/49	-5 (399)	26904 (8)	265	342	104	85 (1)	195	177
47.	Evergreen State College (WA)*	63	20	62/63	1 (272)	739 (159)	19	13	403	29 (44)	223	219
48.	Niagara University (NY)	62	30	53/63	10 (92)	0 (219)	144	300	11	7 (517)	53	39
49.	College of New Rochelle (NY)	62	88	29/35	6 (149)	0 (219)	330	381	403	7 (536)	201	55
50.	Our Lady of the Lake Univ.—San Ant. (TX)	62	66	32/34	2 (253)	0 (219)	78	183	333	12 (285)	143	42

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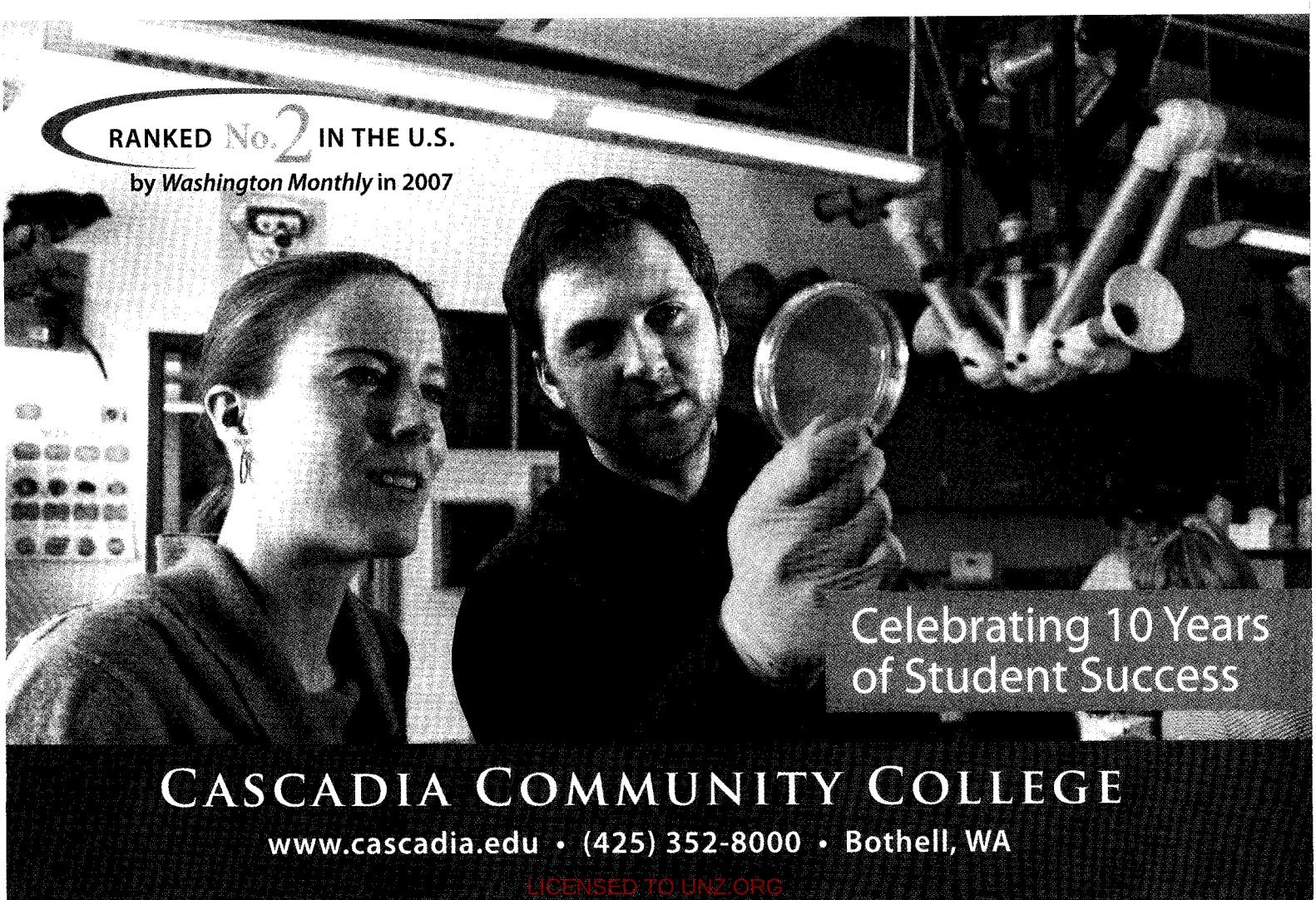
OVERALL SCORE: Overall score represents the combined score of our three metrics—social mobility, research, and service—where the highest is 100 and the lowest is zero. Each metric is weighted equally.

SOCIAL MOBILITY: The first column shows the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants. The second shows the predicted rate of graduation, based on incoming SAT scores and Pell Grant percentages, versus the actual rate of graduation. The third shows the difference between the actual graduation rate and the predicted graduation rate—a measure of how well the school performs as an engine of social mobility (see "A Note on Methodology," p. 86)—arrived at by subtracting the latter from the former. (The higher the number, the better; negative numbers indicate subpar performance.) Rank follows in parentheses.

RESEARCH: The first column shows the number of dollars (in thousands) in total research expenditures. Rank follows in parentheses. The second shows the school's ranking in the number of bachelor's recipients who go on to receive PhDs, relative to school size.

SERVICE: The first column ranks the school by the number of alumni who go on to serve in the Peace Corps, relative to school size. The second column ranks the school by percentage of students who serve in ROTC. The third gives the percentage of funds in federal work-study money that goes to community service (versus non–community service); rank follows in parentheses. The fourth column shows the school's rank on a combined measure of the number of students participating in community service and the total number of service hours performed, both relative to school size. The fifth column shows the school's rank on a combined measure of the number of staff supporting community service, relative to the total number of staff; the number of academic courses that incorporate service, relative to school size; and whether the institution provides scholarships for community service.



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TOP 50 BACCALAUREATE COLLEGES

*Public institution

		OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY: % students receiving Pell Grants	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	RESEARCH: Research expenditures in thousands (rank)	RESEARCH: Bachelor's to PhD rank	SERVICE: Peace Corps rank	SERVICE: ROTC rank	SERVICE: % of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	SERVICE: Community service participation and hours served rank	SERVICE: Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
1.	Bard Col. at Simon's Rock (MA)	100	24	71/73	2 (141)	0 (23)	1	1	141	50 (6)	82	81
2.	Northwestern College (IA)	91	31	58/60	2 (134)	0 (23)	8	4	141	18 (90)	21	5
3.	Taylor University (IN)	86	18	66/78	12 (48)	0 (23)	9	6	141	10 (197)	8	30
4.	Cooper Union (NY)	79	15	81/86	5 (103)	171 (22)	2	97	103	27 (39)	82	81
5.	Messiah College (PA)	77	17	62/77	15 (26)	0 (23)	29	10	64	8 (226)	9	2
6.	Augustana College (SD)	76	21	61/68	7 (91)	807 (17)	3	38	101	21 (75)	82	81
7.	Claflin University (SC)	73	72	34/51	17 (16)	929 (15)	116	97	39	13 (140)	23	29
8.	Elmira College (NY)	72	22	58/61	3 (123)	0 (23)	22	14	12	7 (279)	11	25
9.	Trinity Christian College (IL)	72	70	45/59	14 (33)	0 (23)	98	32	141	7 (278)	62	14
10.	Benedict College (SC)	69	76	19/29	10 (63)	1604 (14)	176	97	25	12 (161)	17	11
11.	Elizabeth City State U. (NC)*	69	66	28/43	15 (23)	1892 (12)	105	97	13	23 (54)	78	75
12.	College of St. Mary (NE)	67	65	38/62	24 (9)	0 (23)	180	97	141	27 (41)	37	10
13.	Loras College (IA)	66	27	55/60	5 (111)	0 (23)	16	16	129	16 (105)	19	15
14.	Manchester College (IN)	66	33	49/56	7 (82)	0 (23)	14	9	141	8 (234)	20	37
15.	Concordia University (NE)	65	28	57/62	5 (104)	0 (23)	6	97	22	17 (96)	82	81
16.	Unity College (ME)	63	38	49/46	-3 (178)	0 (23)	180	2	141	10 (189)	6	8
17.	Mars Hill College (NC)	63	46	41/38	-3 (177)	0 (23)	36	57	120	33 (20)	10	18
18.	Midland Lutheran College (NE)	62	39	43/55	12 (49)	0 (23)	23	5	35	16 (111)	82	81
19.	Franklin College (IN)	61	27	49/56	7 (86)	0 (23)	121	21	117	36 (16)	16	7
20.	College of the Ozarks (MO)	61	56	46/58	12 (50)	0 (23)	62	97	67	3 (293)	18	43
21.	Tuskegee University (AL)	60	20	42/46	4 (119)	14329 (1)	33	85	5	10 (182)	82	81
22.	Culver-Stockton College (MO)	60	48	45/53	8 (78)	0 (23)	24	97	141	39 (12)	45	81
23.	Florida Southern College (FL)	59	24	54/52	-2 (169)	0 (23)	59	82	9	30 (27)	36	20
24.	Ohio Northern University (OH)	59	20	63/74	11 (53)	0 (23)	21	30	69	12 (156)	26	74
25.	Quincy University (IL)	59	56	45/52	7 (84)	0 (23)	17	97	141	29 (37)	82	81
26.	Defiance College (OH)	57	38	47/58	11 (52)	0 (23)	140	97	141	7 (262)	3	4
27.	Erskine College (SC)	56	23	55/58	3 (129)	0 (23)	4	97	87	12 (159)	82	81
28.	Eastern Nazarene College (MA)	56	26	48/61	13 (39)	0 (23)	25	11	97	40 (10)	82	81
29.	Central State University (OH)*	56	72	24/28	4 (116)	2320 (10)	111	97	34	7 (255)	82	81
30.	Univ. of Maine—Farmington (ME)*	56	39	46/59	13 (38)	0 (23)	56	13	133	34 (19)	82	81
31.	Ouachita Baptist Univ. (AR)	55	20	58/60	2 (140)	0 (23)	51	71	28	15 (114)	13	35
32.	Univ. of Arkansas—Pine Bluff (AR)*	55	57	25/28	3 (122)	5831 (2)	117	97	16	12 (162)	82	81
33.	Buena Vista University (IA)	55	39	48/61	13 (41)	0 (23)	50	51	76	7 (281)	64	21
34.	U. of the Cumberlands (KY)	54	47	42/37	-5 (202)	0 (23)	123	97	4	10 (185)	47	28
35.	Marietta College (OH)	53	28	54/63	9 (66)	0 (23)	71	69	141	17 (99)	14	34
36.	Wiley College (TX)	53	99	18/27	9 (71)	0 (23)	102	97	141	10 (201)	82	81
37.	Adrian College (MI)	53	29	53/50	-3 (187)	0 (23)	26	97	92	79 (1)	82	81
38.	Keuka College (NY)	52	36	41/52	11 (51)	0 (23)	164	97	141	40 (11)	5	24
39.	Kentucky State University (KY)*	52	57	28/26	-2 (173)	3548 (7)	137	97	99	15 (122)	34	73
40.	Wilmington College (OH)	52	41	45/55	10 (58)	0 (23)	53	97	141	11 (171)	41	16
41.	Huntington University (IN)	51	24	51/60	9 (74)	0 (23)	73	8	141	30 (30)	42	70
42.	Shaw University (NC)	51	71	19/28	9 (72)	1826 (13)	135	97	58	12 (163)	81	64
43.	Lebanon Valley College (PA)	51	22	58/68	10 (57)	0 (23)	12	39	102	9 (212)	82	81
44.	Dordt College (IA)	51	26	59/69	10 (60)	0 (23)	19	63	141	18 (91)	82	81
45.	U. of Pittsburgh—Johnstown (PA)*	50	28	49/62	13 (35)	0 (23)	30	88	138	15 (120)	66	31
46.	Covenant College (GA)	50	24	60/65	5 (112)	0 (23)	37	12	66	12 (153)	82	81
47.	Voorhees College (SC)	50	87	15/28	13 (43)	0 (23)	180	97	6	0 (297)	82	81
48.	St. Augustine's College (NC)	49	75	19/8	-11 (263)	0 (23)	162	97	7	7 (265)	22	26
49.	Brescia University (KY)	49	31	45/41	-4 (191)	0 (23)	5	97	141	10 (194)	82	81
50.	Black Hills State University (SD)*	49	36	44/31	-13 (277)	2935 (8)	70	89	30	12 (157)	73	76

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U.S. News makes drawing comparisons even more difficult by breaking up its ranking of master's universities into four separate regional groupings: North, South, West, and Midwest. The magazine gives the same treatment to "baccalaureate colleges," a Carnegie classification for schools that focus on undergraduate education but offer fewer than half of their degrees in the liberal arts. How does the best baccalaureate college in the South stack up against the second best in the West? *U.S. News* won't tell you.

So when we decided to rank master's and baccalaureate institutions for the first time this year, we avoided *U.S. News*'s regional categories. We also, of course, evaluated the schools based on our own criteria (service, social mobility, and research) rather than those of *U.S. News* (fame, exclusivity, and money). Not surprisingly, there are some big differences between the results.

To find St. Mary's in last year's *U.S. News* rankings, for instance, you need to turn to its western division of master's universities, where St. Mary's comes in at fifteenth place. In our rankings, St. Mary's is the number one master's university in the country, a testament to its outstanding commitment to serving low-income students and its stellar record of fostering community service. Similarly, three historically black master's universities in our top fifty—Alcorn State, Grambling State, and North Carolina Central universities—languish in the third and fourth tiers of the *U.S. News* rankings. The same happens to a dozen baccalaureate colleges in our top fifty—schools like Benedict College and Unity College that do admirable work but get buried by *U.S. News*.

But even our rankings leave us with a nagging question: How do our top-ranked master's and baccalaureate institutions compare to the best national universities and liberal arts colleges? As a thought experiment, we ran a few numbers, and here's what we found: If we bypassed the Carnegie classification scheme, St. Mary's would rank number eight among liberal arts colleges, beating out elite institutions like Wesleyan University, Wellesley College, and Pomona College. In the specific category of social mobility, it would rank ninth among liberal arts colleges. And because it excels in the percentage of its students participating in community service and in the total number of hours they serve, it would rank second in the service category among national universities, and fourth among liberal arts colleges.

Other little-known master's and baccalaureate institutions would also stand out if we placed them alongside big-name schools. Five others would end up in the top thirty among liberal arts colleges, including Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia, and Claflin University, a historically black college in Orangeburg, South Carolina. Bard College at Simon's Rock, our top-rated baccalaureate college, would rank thirteenth among national universities in the percentage of students going on to get their PhD, beating out schools like Johns Hopkins and Columbia. The Cooper Union in New York City would also rank in the top fifteen among national universities on that measure. The University of Portland would be number three in Peace Corps participation.

Institutions like St. Mary's and our other top-ranked master's and baccalaureate institutions don't spend a lot of time and money chasing after fame and glory. They're too busy serving their students and communities well. In doing so, they have a lot to teach academia about giving back to the country. WM

Erin Dillon is a senior policy analyst at Education Sector, an independent think tank in Washington, D.C. She compiled the data for this year's college rankings.

IT'S TIME FOR TEXAS A&M

Every day, Texas A&M University faculty and students apply their minds, character and leadership to serving the greater good, from rescue robots and medical innovations to old-fashioned hard work in service. On the following pages are just a few of the thousands of stories that show how Texas A&M is turning discovery into deeds — promise into impact.

IT'S TIME FOR

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

*Public university

			SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH					SERVICE				
		OVERALL SCORE	% of students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	PhDs awarded rank	Faculty awards rank	National Academies membership rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
1.	Univ. of California—San Diego (CA)*	100	36	73/85	12 (16)	799 (5)	43	20	6	7	52	223	23 (44)	16	116
2.	University of California—Berkeley (CA)*	97	26	83/90	7 (50)	552 (18)	17	1	3	2	15	197	25 (34)	138	138
3.	Univ. of California—Los Angeles (CA)*	93	25	78/89	11 (19)	823 (3)	32	8	37	20	48	163	12 (162)	1	46
4.	Stanford University (CA)	87	12	96/94	-2 (158)	688 (9)	6	10	17	4	50	201	34 (10)	107	65
5.	University of Texas—Austin (TX)*	83	23	72/78	6 (57)	447 (29)	55	6	24	16	62	162	31 (16)	3	93
6.	University of California—Davis (CA)*	81	33	64/81	17 (2)	601 (13)	42	18	77	44	34	157	25 (33)	77	134
7.	University of Michigan—Ann Arbor (MI)*	79	11	81/88	7 (49)	809 (4)	29	2	23	33	28	118	14 (124)	29	22
8.	Syracuse University (NY)	78	22	66/80	14 (7)	36 (158)	102	96	120	87	70	129	26 (30)	24	1
9.	Harvard University (MA)	78	13	100/98	-2 (166)	451 (26)	10	14	1	3	121	186	18 (84)	138	138
10.	College of William and Mary (VA)*	77	8	86/91	5 (74)	50 (144)	20	182	51	153	2	37	20 (69)	12	33
11.	Univ. of California—Santa Barbara (CA)*	76	25	67/81	14 (8)	191 (75)	54	38	50	8	55	188	15 (109)	6	117
12.	University of Chicago (IL)	75	13	94/92	-2 (162)	322 (46)	8	46	52	27	3	221	27 (27)	52	127
13.	U. of North Carolina—Chapel Hill (NC)*	74	13	81/86	5 (76)	477 (23)	37	22	22	47	7	115	12 (165)	9	75
14.	South Carolina State University (SC)*	74	71	26/45	19 (1)	4 (222)	187	241	214	153	250	9	22 (50)	138	138
15.	Massachusetts Inst. of Technology (MA)	72	14	99/94	-5 (198)	614 (12)	2	5	40	6	158	69	16 (104)	138	138
16.	University of Washington (WA)*	72	19	69/77	8 (39)	757 (7)	61	14	16	10	17	127	13 (131)	115	78
17.	Case Western Reserve Univ. (OH)	71	21	81/81	0 (135)	372 (36)	19	64	29	36	75	202	26 (32)	99	5
18.	Rutgers, St. U. of N.J.—Newark (NJ)*	71	62	50/59	9 (32)	21 (180)	192	180	46	153	226	232	13 (144)	131	7
19.	Georgetown University (DC)	71	10	87/93	6 (62)	132 (94)	35	121	20	78	8	79	12 (175)	21	12
20.	Texas A&M U.—Col. Station (TX)*	68	16	68/78	10 (27)	544 (20)	119	17	74	54	143	1	28 (23)	138	138
21.	Dartmouth College (NH)	67	14	96/95	-1 (146)	193 (73)	9	118	12	32	10	181	9 (211)	63	70
22.	Johns Hopkins University (MD)	66	12	92/89	-3 (171)	1554 (1)	14	23	18	18	27	77	10 (205)	138	138
23.	Univ. of Wisconsin—Madison (WI)*	66	10	77/81	4 (81)	841 (2)	36	3	13	19	32	147	12 (155)	78	87
24.	Princeton University (NJ)	65	9	100/96	-4 (182)	189 (78)	3	49	2	5	206	133	10 (198)	138	138
25.	Rice University (TX)	65	15	94/93	-1 (153)	70 (126)	7	68	14	23	20	178	13 (132)	108	53
26.	SUNY Col. of Envir. Sci. & For. (NY)*	64	53	61/71	10 (26)	24 (175)	78	195	214	153	6	212	11 (187)	138	138
27.	U. of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign (IL)*	64	16	78/82	4 (87)	474 (24)	38	4	7	17	67	113	23 (41)	138	138
28.	Tennessee State University (TN)*	64	69	29/36	7 (54)	12 (198)	180	213	214	153	244	152	20 (71)	80	21

OVERALL SCORE: Overall score represents the combined score of our three metrics—social mobility, research, and service—where the highest is 100 and the lowest is zero. Each metric is weighted equally.

SOCIAL MOBILITY: The first column shows the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants. The second shows the predicted rate of graduation, based on incoming SAT scores and Pell Grant percentages, versus the actual rate of graduation. The third shows the difference between the actual graduation rate and the predicted graduation rate—a measure of how well the school performs as an engine of social mobility (see "A Note on Methodology," p. 86)—arrived at by subtracting the latter from the former. (The higher the number, the better; negative numbers indicate subpar performance.) Rank follows in parentheses.

RESEARCH: The first column shows the number of dollars (in millions) in total research expenditures. Rank follows in parentheses. The second shows the school's ranking in the number of bachelor's recipients who go on to receive PhDs relative to school size. The third ranks the school by the number of science and engineering PhDs awarded. The fourth column shows the school's ranking by the number of faculty receiving prestigious awards relative to the number of full-time faculty. The fifth column ranks the school by the number of faculty who are members of the National Academies relative to the number of full-time faculty.

SERVICE: The first column ranks the school by the number of alumni who go on to serve in the Peace Corps, relative to school size. The second column ranks the school by the percentage of students who serve in ROTC. The third gives the percentage of funds in federal work-study money that goes to community service (versus non-community service); rank follows in parentheses. The fourth column shows the school's rank on a combined measure of the number of students participating in community service and the total number of service hours performed, both relative to school size. The fifth column shows the school's rank on a combined measure of the number of staff supporting community service, relative to the total number of staff; the number of academic courses that incorporate service, relative to school size; and whether the institution provides scholarships for community service.

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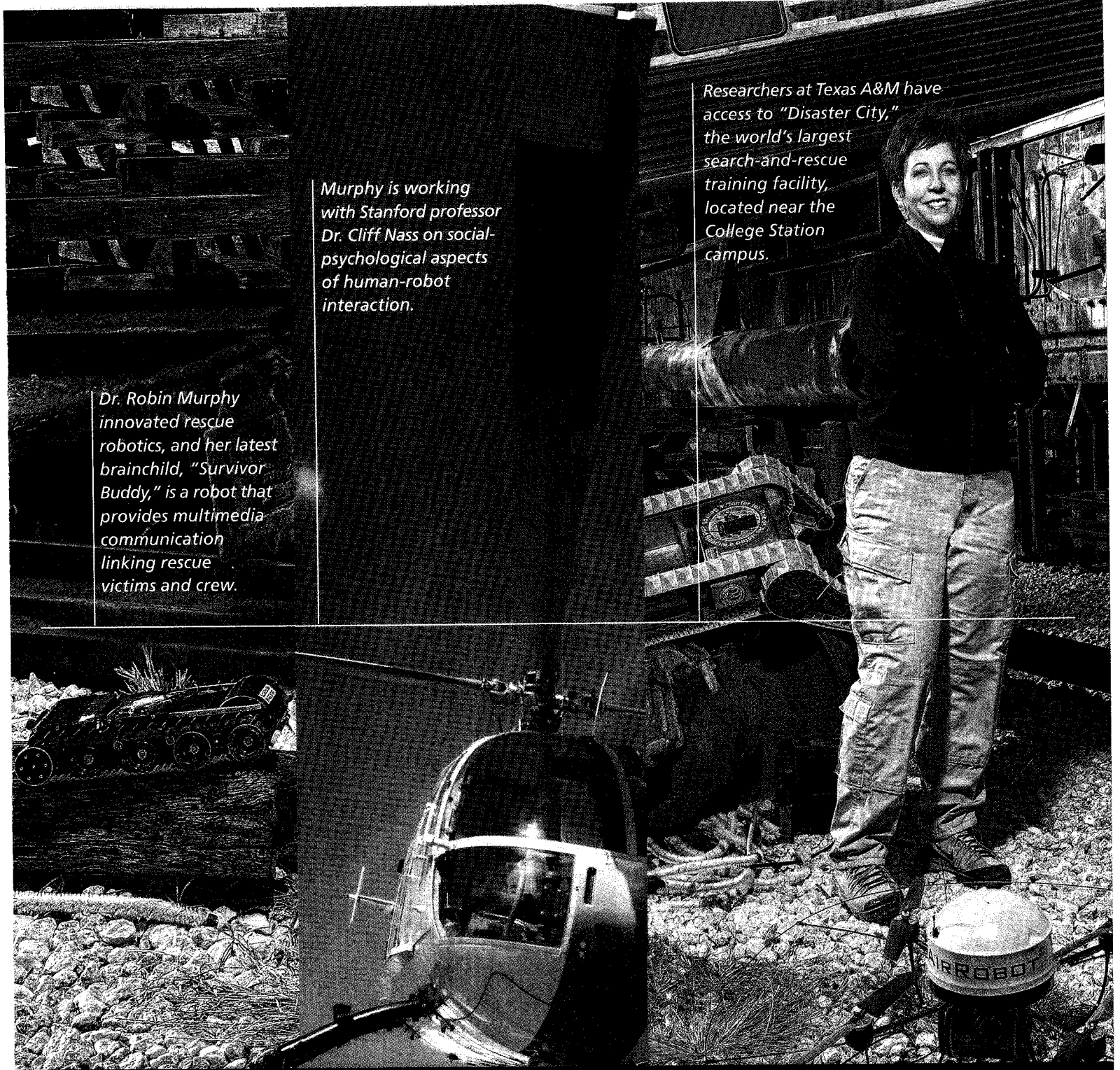

Dr. Robin Murphy innovated rescue robotics, and her latest brainchild, "Survivor Buddy," is a robot that provides multimedia communication linking rescue victims and crew.

Murphy is working with Stanford professor Dr. Cliff Nass on social-psychological aspects of human-robot interaction.

Researchers at Texas A&M have access to "Disaster City," the world's largest search-and-rescue training facility, located near the College Station campus.

A Time to Save | *Dr. Robin Murphy*

Excellence is not just a Texas A&M core value to Dr. Robin Murphy, professor of computer science and engineering. It's a force she demonstrated in search-and-rescue missions at ground zero after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. It's also why she won the Motohiro Kisoi Award from the International Rescue Systems Institute—the first time the award has been given outside of Japan—for her outstanding contributions in establishing a new research field in rescue engineering. You might say excellence is hard-wired in Murphy.

Research that improves, or in Dr. Murphy's case, potentially *saves* lives, is what sets us apart. As a land-, space- and sea-grant university, Texas A&M offers faculty and students infinite opportunities to seek their own excellence, time and time again.

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			SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH					SERVICE				
		OVERALL SCORE	% of students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	PhDs awarded rank	Faculty awards rank	National Academies membership rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
29.	Duke University (NC)	63	9	96/95	-1 (154)	782 (6)	12	37	43	29	69	47	7 (248)	68	97
30.	University of Rochester (NY)	63	16	83/84	1 (115)	373 (35)	16	60	97	38	29	51	21 (57)	90	103
31.	Fordham University (NY)	63	21	72/78	6 (60)	6 (215)	143	151	116	102	73	32	19 (75)	8	23
32.	Marquette University (WI)	63	12	70/76	6 (66)	10 (202)	71	160	147	153	26	3	8 (235)	13	15
33.	Yale University (CT)	62	11	100/97	-3 (174)	449 (28)	4	35	25	13	11	243	8 (239)	138	138
34.	University of Pennsylvania (PA)	62	10	95/95	0 (131)	648 (10)	28	34	81	22	58	193	21 (59)	103	48
35.	Penn. State U.—University Park (PA)*	61	13	69/85	16 (4)	582 (15)	49	12	60	57	89	41	22 (48)	138	138
36.	Washington University in St. Louis (MO)	61	5	99/94	-5 (193)	573 (16)	22	58	27	30	93	171	17 (92)	4	76
37.	Vanderbilt University (TN)	61	11	93/89	-4 (188)	399 (32)	24	56	36	62	38	29	18 (83)	27	136
38.	Cornell University (NY)	61	12	92/93	1 (118)	449 (27)	11	21	84	21	18	132	11 (188)	138	138
39.	Univ. of Southern California (CA)	60	13	88/88	0 (137)	508 (22)	123	24	113	35	88	96	35 (8)	119	82
40.	Univ. of California—Riverside (CA)*	60	40	50/64	14 (10)	128 (96)	96	67	91	80	155	199	40 (4)	138	138
41.	California Institute of Technology (CA)	60	10	100/88	-12 (234)	285 (52)	1	63	4	1	49	243	8 (226)	138	138
42.	University of Florida (FL)*	60	21	77/82	5 (73)	593 (14)	52	6	109	76	45	99	12 (173)	109	133
43.	U. of Minnesota—Twin Cities (MN)*	60	19	70/66	-4 (180)	624 (11)	79	11	93	55	59	156	32 (14)	42	81
44.	University of Virginia (VA)*	59	8	84/93	9 (35)	230 (63)	31	41	32	37	9	65	11 (184)	105	128
45.	Jackson State University (MS)*	59	65	30/43	13 (11)	37 (156)	91	217	154	153	250	39	14 (119)	138	138
46.	Ohio State Univ.—Columbus (OH)*	59	17	74/73	-1 (145)	720 (8)	133	9	72	59	86	81	25 (35)	75	109
47.	New York University (NY)	59	16	85/85	0 (138)	298 (50)	92	54	80	46	77	225	30 (18)	33	51
48.	Carnegie Mellon University (PA)	59	10	91/87	-4 (185)	197 (72)	15	45	69	15	39	141	21 (60)	49	73
49.	Michigan State University (MI)*	58	19	63/75	12 (17)	361 (39)	110	29	105	97	41	139	12 (170)	66	24
50.	University of California—Irvine (CA)*	58	26	65/81	16 (5)	310 (48)	122	27	15	25	97	228	15 (106)	138	138
51.	Clark University (MA)	58	15	69/73	4 (92)	5 (216)	48	176	10	49	4	179	9 (215)	20	50
52.	Virginia Tech (VA)*	58	10	70/78	8 (46)	367 (37)	62	39	55	63	92	11	14 (126)	41	94
53.	Tufts University (MA)	58	12	94/92	-2 (164)	131 (95)	27	107	11	48	31	182	15 (118)	79	25
54.	Iowa State University (IA)*	57	19	61/67	6 (64)	217 (66)	74	42	158	82	110	54	65 (3)	138	138
55.	University of San Diego (CA)	56	10	69/75	6 (59)	1 (239)	84	221	214	153	43	4	12 (164)	11	28
56.	Widener University (PA)	56	20	46/56	10 (29)	0 (243)	252	229	214	153	223	12	34 (11)	26	14
57.	University of Notre Dame (IN)	56	8	93/96	3 (104)	77 (119)	23	74	71	92	35	10	19 (79)	138	138
58.	Rutgers, St. U. of N.J.—New Brun. (NJ)*	55	28	67/75	8 (42)	281 (53)	82	32	33	31	161	148	13 (144)	130	101
59.	Boston College (MA)	55	10	85/91	6 (67)	39 (152)	56	125	110	93	14	110	14 (122)	28	63
60.	Tulane University (LA)	55	11	85/74	-11 (232)	137 (90)	47	113	208	142	40	19	12 (160)	15	4
61.	Clark Atlanta University (GA)	55	66	33/45	12 (14)	9 (208)	137	230	119	84	113	160	3 (255)	138	138
62.	Clemson University (SC)*	55	14	72/79	7 (53)	212 (68)	128	90	56	147	138	21	12 (168)	45	19
63.	Brown University (RI)	55	12	95/94	-1 (148)	153 (83)	5	81	5	28	19	241	7 (245)	138	138
64.	Georgia Institute of Technology (GA)*	54	11	84/77	-7 (210)	473 (25)	51	19	19	11	68	49	15 (108)	93	110
65.	Northwestern University (IL)	54	9	96/94	-2 (161)	443 (30)	21	33	8	26	25	196	12 (161)	138	138
66.	St. John's University (NY)	54	36	54/60	6 (56)	2 (230)	232	201	41	153	247	122	14 (120)	40	17
67.	Columbia University (NY)	53	12	96/93	-3 (168)	546 (19)	18	25	34	12	57	224	11 (181)	138	138
68.	University of Idaho (ID)*	52	36	54/57	3 (96)	83 (116)	104	136	198	153	87	28	13 (129)	102	30
69.	Azusa Pacific University (CA)	52	19	55/63	8 (41)	0 (243)	241	241	160	153	72	33	8 (227)	46	2
70.	Howard University (DC)	51	38	61/65	4 (85)	38 (155)	66	127	211	68	130	26	21 (56)	138	138
71.	George Washington Univ. (DC)	51	8	80/81	1 (122)	126 (97)	75	94	39	65	5	27	12 (163)	133	80
72.	Duquesne University (PA)	51	19	60/74	14 (9)	9 (207)	109	203	214	153	183	38	18 (86)	14	59
73.	University of San Francisco (CA)	51	21	63/67	4 (83)	1 (235)	136	240	159	153	120	15	12 (158)	51	13
74.	Florida A&M University (FL)*	51	52	35/41	6 (68)	17 (188)	156	225	214	153	222	14	13 (153)	134	108

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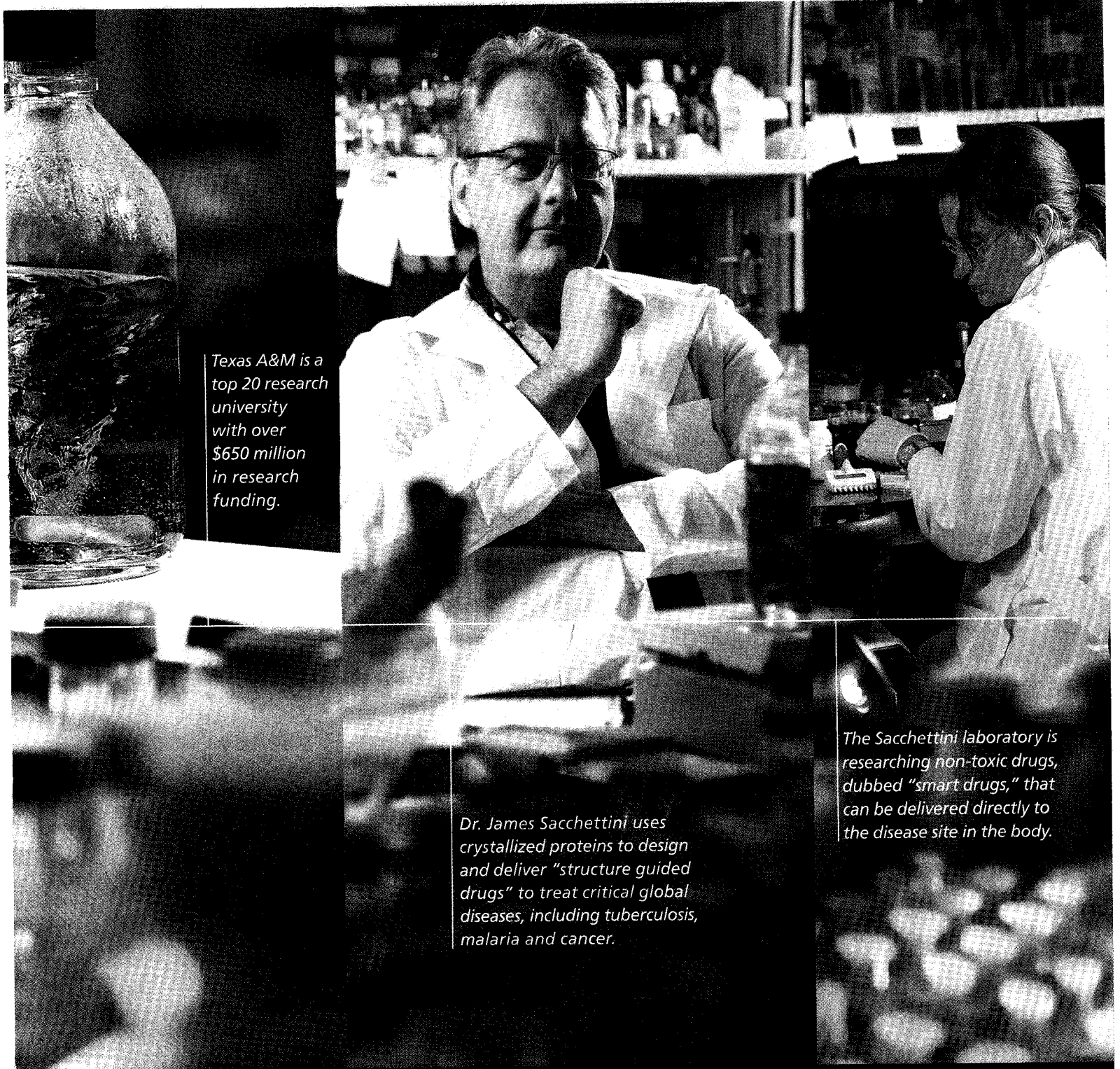

Texas A&M is a top 20 research university with over $650 million in research funding.

Dr. James Sacchettini uses crystallized proteins to design and deliver "structure guided drugs" to treat critical global diseases, including tuberculosis, malaria and cancer.

The Sacchettini laboratory is researching non-toxic drugs, dubbed "smart drugs," that can be delivered directly to the disease site in the body.

A Time to Heal | *Dr. James Sacchettini*

Blending humanity with science, Dr. James Sacchettini, professor of biochemistry and biophysics, is combining structural biology with computational drug discovery to rapidly and cost-effectively discover new drugs by screening thousands of compounds at a time.

Graduate and undergraduate students alike have opportunities to engage in hands-on research under the guidance of senior faculty who are as dedicated to their students as to their own research. At Texas A&M, intellectual power and selfless service combine to relieve suffering, save lives and inspire fertile minds to excel—time and time again.

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

			SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH					SERVICE				
		OVERALL SCORE	% of students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	PhDs awarded rank	Faculty awards rank	National Academies membership rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff courses, and financial aid support rank
75.	Wake Forest University (NC)	51	7	83/88	5 (77)	186 (79)	25	138	99	118	56	36	8 (238)	37	43
76.	N.C. State Univ.—Raleigh (NC)*	50	16	65/71	6 (70)	332 (44)	108	30	87	50	147	42	12 (172)	47	54
77.	University of Dayton (OH)	49	11	66/75	9 (31)	74 (122)	129	208	153	153	47	24	13 (146)	35	27
78.	Rensselaer Polytechnic Inst. (NY)	49	13	84/83	-1 (156)	77 (120)	26	74	186	34	213	8	12 (174)	88	104
79.	SUNY—Binghamton (NY)*	49	22	76/78	2 (112)	35 (160)	58	120	67	128	84	195	13 (143)	17	114
80.	Clarkson University (NY)	49	22	64/70	6 (71)	17 (186)	40	190	42	153	115	2	7 (251)	138	138
81.	Miami Univ.—Oxford (OH)*	49	11	68/81	13 (12)	24 (176)	69	174	204	153	24	94	13 (148)	22	86
82.	Brandeis University (MA)	48	12	88/89	1 (128)	57 (135)	13	133	49	14	13	243	12 (171)	138	138
83.	Purdue U.—W. Lafayette (IN)*	48	16	64/72	8 (43)	415 (31)	116	12	133	51	129	53	22 (49)	138	138
84.	Colorado State University (CO)*	47	14	59/63	4 (89)	288 (51)	105	65	134	81	30	89	16 (101)	31	49
85.	Spalding University (KY)	47	59	34/35	1 (125)	0 (243)	251	241	214	153	135	214	34 (9)	138	138
86.	American University (DC)	47	10	76/76	0 (139)	3 (224)	94	160	189	153	1	86	14 (125)	110	111
87.	Emory University (GA)	47	14	90/87	-3 (173)	398 (33)	30	92	83	60	22	229	21 (55)	138	138
88.	North Carolina A&T State Univ. (NC)*	47	57	32/38	6 (58)	24 (174)	165	225	175	153	219	52	15 (113)	138	138
89.	St. Louis University (MO)	47	18	72/74	2 (111)	54 (138)	121	133	214	148	149	180	11 (186)	2	37
90.	Loyola University Chicago (IL)	47	23	69/66	-3 (177)	35 (161)	77	142	196	153	105	97	24 (39)	23	60
91.	U. of Maryland—College Park (MD)*	46	11	78/82	4 (84)	360 (40)	63	16	100	52	82	169	9 (220)	64	120
92.	Univ. of Missouri (MO)*	46	14	66/69	3 (97)	229 (64)	80	61	149	120	103	66	33 (12)	114	98
93.	U. of California—Santa Cruz (CA)*	46	23	62/72	10 (24)	125 (98)	45	98	75	45	21	243	13 (135)	138	138
94.	University of Georgia (GA)*	45	13	71/79	8 (45)	333 (43)	76	44	126	91	63	142	9 (219)	58	83
95.	University of Arizona (AZ)*	45	19	58/57	-1 (150)	532 (21)	68	26	48	42	66	88	26 (31)	138	137
96.	Univ. of S.C.—Columbia (SC)*	45	14	67/67	0 (136)	159 (82)	169	72	54	121	85	45	22 (51)	32	121
97.	University of Connecticut (CT)*	45	14	69/76	7 (55)	109 (106)	124	47	58	113	108	155	20 (66)	81	84
98.	Polytechnic Inst. of New York U. (NY)	45	46	62/53	-9 (221)	14 (192)	85	180	9	9	250	226	10 (200)	138	138
99.	SUNY—Stony Brook (NY)*	45	32	66/61	-5 (194)	268 (55)	89	36	102	61	163	216	15 (110)	125	52
100.	University of Memphis (TN)*	45	40	49/38	-11 (230)	44 (149)	197	144	205	153	239	64	13 (136)	55	3
101.	Catholic Univ. of America (DC)	44	10	60/71	11 (21)	20 (181)	72	166	44	100	54	40	35 (7)	138	138
102.	Pepperdine University (CA)	43	12	74/81	7 (51)	0 (243)	50	231	214	153	65	183	19 (76)	39	38
103.	Morgan State University (MD)*	43	48	33/32	-1 (141)	11 (199)	154	231	170	153	191	16	23 (42)	138	138
104.	University of Pittsburgh (PA)*	43	14	74/76	2 (113)	559 (17)	53	30	68	70	76	119	15 (112)	138	138
105.	University of Delaware (DE)*	43	9	69/73	4 (90)	118 (100)	59	86	76	56	94	145	20 (64)	44	58
106.	Univ. of Mass.—Amherst (MA)*	42	19	64/68	4 (86)	141 (87)	86	53	28	66	114	184	13 (147)	97	71
107.	University of St. Thomas (MN)	42	13	63/72	9 (37)	1 (241)	135	241	214	153	145	43	8 (240)	10	31
108.	Florida State University (FL)*	42	17	68/70	2 (110)	190 (76)	115	62	188	85	96	117	13 (133)	73	35
109.	University of Iowa (IA)*	42	14	66/66	0 (132)	363 (38)	87	43	73	53	83	120	32 (13)	138	138
110.	Mississippi State University (MS)*	42	26	56/60	4 (95)	206 (71)	118	129	210	144	245	73	26 (29)	82	107
111.	University of Alabama (AL)*	42	13	60/64	4 (80)	36 (159)	158	112	185	153	201	146	28 (24)	18	26
112.	DePaul University (IL)	42	23	63/64	1 (119)	3 (223)	230	210	171	153	99	205	17 (95)	89	10
113.	Indiana Univ. of Pennsylvania (PA)*	42	35	42/50	8 (44)	0 (242)	88	217	192	153	174	70	8 (228)	62	47
114.	University of Oregon (OR)*	42	17	57/66	9 (34)	62 (131)	111	116	26	67	12	58	8 (237)	138	138
115.	Boston University (MA)	41	10	77/80	3 (108)	249 (59)	57	28	122	69	23	61	10 (197)	138	138
116.	University of Vermont (VT)*	41	14	68/71	3 (105)	113 (103)	120	149	89	127	44	143	15 (111)	95	32
117.	Oregon State University (OR)*	41	22	55/62	7 (48)	189 (77)	153	78	123	95	51	23	10 (194)	138	138
118.	University at Albany—SUNY (NY)*	40	26	58/64	6 (65)	309 (49)	125	101	78	132	119	187	21 (54)	138	138
119.	University of Kentucky (KY)*	40	17	59/58	-1 (155)	332 (45)	117	56	132	134	151	111	16 (100)	43	34
120.	University of La Verne (CA)	40	39	43/60	17 (3)	0 (243)	206	241	214	153	187	239	17 (87)	138	138

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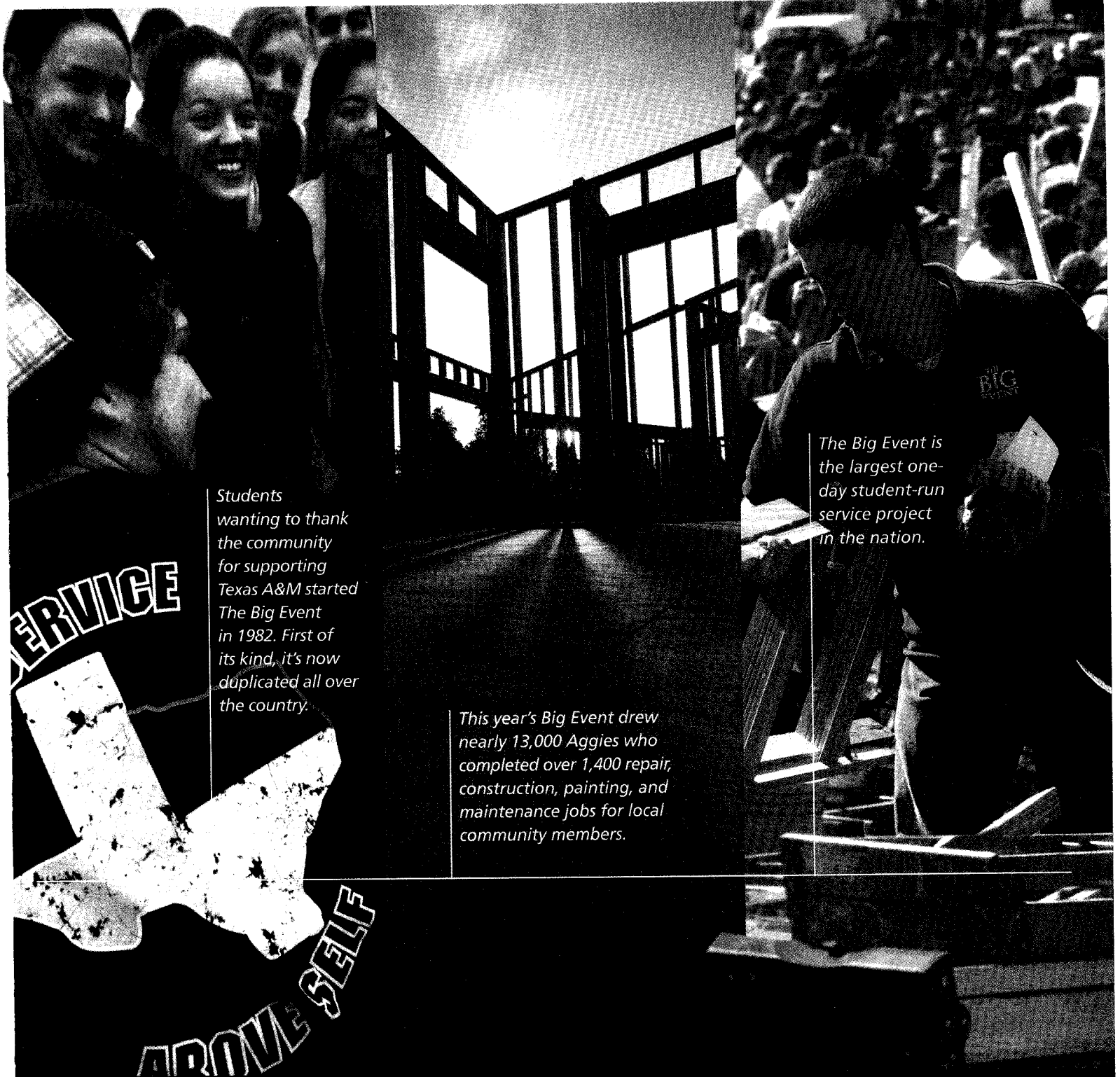

Students wanting to thank the community for supporting Texas A&M started The Big Event in 1982. First of its kind, it's now duplicated all over the country.

This year's Big Event drew nearly 13,000 Aggies who completed over 1,400 repair, construction, painting, and maintenance jobs for local community members.

The Big Event is the largest one-day student-run service project in the nation.

A Time to Serve | *The Big Event*

Selfless service is part of the culture of Texas A&M University. The clear vision of purpose and commitment shared by our faculty and students drives academic achievement and personal growth, but it is service that benefits the greater good.

The Big Event is a centerpiece of Texas Aggies' dedication to service, one of our core values students can demonstrate in action. The goodwill generated by The Big Event reinforces our other core values of excellence, integrity, leadership, loyalty and respect, all combining to build productive lives and forge leaders of character, time after time.

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

	OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY: % of students receiving Pell Grants	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	RESEARCH: Research expenditures in millions (rank)	RESEARCH: Bachelor's to PhD rank	RESEARCH: PhDs awarded rank	RESEARCH: Faculty awards rank	RESEARCH: National Academies membership rank	SERVICE: Peace Corps rank	SERVICE: ROTC rank	SERVICE: % of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	SERVICE: Community service participation and hours served rank	SERVICE: Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
121. University at Buffalo—SUNY (NY)*	39	26	63/62	-1 (151)	315 (47)	113	52	57	89	157	203	10 (206)	98	105
122. Florida Institute of Technology (FL)	39	21	63/59	-4 (181)	7 (212)	107	184	214	153	144	6	17 (90)	72	124
123. Biola University (CA)	39	28	60/70	10 (23)	0 (243)	178	221	214	153	190	72	22 (52)	138	138
124. Yeshiva University (NY)	39	12	71/83	12 (15)	192 (74)	144	126	62	40	250	243	30 (19)	138	138
125. Montana State University (MT)*	39	22	57/48	-9 (220)	117 (101)	151	169	155	153	61	63	9 (210)	60	6
126. Northern Illinois University (IL)*	38	29	47/51	4 (93)	17 (187)	189	156	95	153	166	121	29 (21)	86	135
127. Univ. of Alabama—Birmingham (AL)*	38	28	59/40	-19 (254)	351 (41)	140	85	182	107	194	48	9 (216)	5	36
128. Indiana Univ.—Bloomington (IN)*	38	13	64/73	9 (33)	110 (105)	114	59	45	73	100	134	20 (65)	138	138
129. Drexel University (PA)	38	18	69/62	-7 (211)	97 (110)	234	96	85	75	164	34	9 (221)	67	18
130. Worcester Polytech. Inst. (MA)	38	14	78/79	1 (127)	13 (196)	33	203	64	90	224	17	14 (121)	138	138
131. Utah State University (UT)*	37	18	57/53	-4 (183)	138 (89)	145	129	201	137	212	71	71 (2)	138	138
132. Lehigh University (PA)	37	10	82/85	3 (106)	37 (157)	41	108	135	24	125	104	7 (253)	74	125
133. Univ. of Colorado—Boulder (CO)*	37	11	68/67	-1 (149)	260 (58)	95	47	90	39	16	75	12 (167)	138	138
134. Wright State University (OH)*	37	31	46/43	-3 (169)	50 (145)	175	176	203	153	196	78	22 (46)	69	39
135. Brigham Young U.—Provo (UT)	37	10	74/79	5 (78)	27 (169)	44	136	213	150	229	123	0 (258)	48	9
136. East Carolina University (NC)*	37	23	48/54	6 (61)	16 (189)	233	236	214	153	204	102	29 (20)	65	77
137. Portland State University (OR)*	36	29	51/34	-17 (252)	26 (171)	225	190	38	135	80	211	8 (224)	7	11
138. Indiana State University (IN)*	36	32	38/44	6 (69)	2 (231)	217	192	176	153	195	191	13 (151)	30	41
139. Univ. of Southern Mississippi (MS)*	36	40	47/43	-4 (179)	47 (147)	65	138	199	153	176	82	11 (182)	123	85
140. Pace University (NY)	36	32	54/55	1 (120)	1 (237)	255	241	166	153	185	236	13 (137)	101	20
141. Trinity International Univ. (IL)	36	33	52/52	0 (130)	0 (243)	210	241	214	153	127	243	11 (185)	36	55
142. West Virginia University (WV)*	35	21	53/56	3 (103)	134 (93)	159	84	118	151	152	60	7 (246)	54	67
143. University of Illinois—Chicago (IL)*	35	36	56/48	-8 (216)	342 (42)	112	49	86	105	154	154	13 (141)	138	138
144. Baylor University (TX)	35	17	70/73	3 (99)	9 (205)	67	192	165	153	95	170	31 (17)	138	138
145. Ohio University (OH)*	35	18	57/70	13 (13)	39 (154)	81	152	59	153	64	91	8 (234)	138	138
146. Univ. of Nebraska—Lincoln (NE)*	35	18	63/64	1 (129)	216 (67)	99	74	125	136	111	74	8 (225)	59	123
147. Univ. of New Hampshire (NH)*	35	14	62/71	9 (30)	114 (102)	103	163	214	153	60	87	11 (190)	83	115
148. University of Kansas (KS)*	35	13	62/60	-2 (157)	135 (91)	97	82	138	106	78	80	8 (230)	25	64
149. University of Texas—El Paso (TX)*	35	53	36/31	-5 (192)	40 (151)	195	179	106	153	232	76	11 (179)	138	138
150. Auburn University (AL)*	35	12	66/64	-2 (160)	141 (88)	90	83	163	129	249	18	35 (6)	138	138
151. University of Montana (MT)*	35	28	54/41	-13 (243)	56 (136)	148	157	70	153	37	105	23 (45)	127	44
152. Temple University (PA)*	35	26	59/62	3 (98)	85 (115)	213	89	124	153	179	144	13 (139)	87	129
153. Southern Illinois U.—Carbondale (IL)*	34	35	47/46	-1 (147)	65 (129)	126	121	194	153	189	107	9 (222)	70	89
154. Bowling Green State Univ. (OH)*	34	28	47/58	11 (22)	9 (204)	190	163	104	153	133	84	13 (134)	138	138
155. Texas A&M Univ.—Kingsville (TX)*	34	48	33/27	-6 (206)	14 (195)	164	231	136	153	240	25	19 (78)	138	138
156. Florida International University (FL)*	34	32	58/49	-9 (222)	91 (113)	224	116	21	110	225	174	31 (15)	138	138
157. University of Louisville (KY)*	34	21	59/46	-13 (241)	151 (85)	182	102	162	124	175	114	19 (74)	71	8
158. Illinois Institute of Tech. (IL)	34	17	74/64	-10 (225)	23 (177)	138	135	167	43	156	5	7 (249)	136	102
159. University of Maine (ME)*	34	25	55/59	4 (94)	96 (111)	168	155	142	96	71	62	13 (154)	138	138
160. Washington State University (WA)*	34	16	59/67	8 (47)	210 (70)	167	88	117	83	101	98	16 (102)	138	138
161. Arizona State University (AZ)*	33	20	55/56	1 (126)	224 (65)	176	40	130	58	148	173	17 (94)	116	106
162. Wayne State University (MI)*	33	42	40/34	-6 (202)	235 (62)	196	73	61	130	208	218	12 (166)	132	96
163. East Tennessee State University (TN)*	33	29	50/42	-8 (214)	8 (209)	177	221	197	153	200	125	39 (5)	120	74
164. U. of North Carolina—Charlotte (NC)*	33	24	53/51	-2 (159)	22 (178)	243	184	47	153	181	103	12 (176)	34	88
165. Michigan Technological Univ. (MI)*	32	21	65/64	-1 (152)	55 (137)	64	152	108	115	91	50	13 (152)	138	138
166. University of Nevada—Las Vegas (NV)*	32	19	49/41	-8 (215)	53 (139)	242	163	172	153	215	167	89 (1)	92	113

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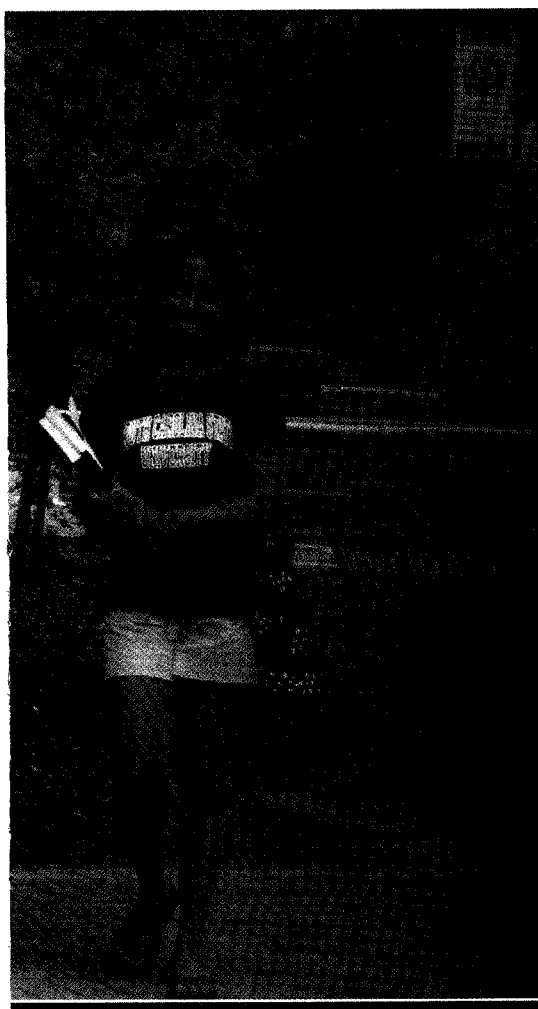

SC STATE UNIVERSITY 1896

SC State University

Gain "A New STATE Of Mind"

At SC State University, we continue to build upon our legacy of excellence. SC State University leads the way in producing graduates who will become leaders in a global society. SC State University has produced 14 generals and thousands of army officers through its ROTC program. Among America's Best Colleges, listed by *US News and World Report*, SC State University is home of the 2009 MEAC Football Champions. The men and women's tennis teams also claimed the 2010 MEAC Championship. Our unique programs and services offered in three colleges pave the way for excellence in nuclear engineering, agribusiness, nursing, and education. Join SC State University, where establishing excellence is our "New STATE of Mind."

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167. Hofstra University (NY)	32	18	66/54	-12 (235)	1 (238)	174	213	63	153	216	128	28 (26)	19	91
168. University of South Dakota (SD)*	32	26	52/48	-4 (184)	21 (179)	211	210	168	153	140	150	28 (25)	100	72
169. University of Miami (FL)	31	14	79/77	-2 (163)	211 (69)	83	104	193	119	46	159	14 (127)	138	138
170. University of Bridgeport (CT)	31	44	33/44	11 (18)	0 (243)	250	241	214	153	250	243	13 (140)	138	138
171. U. of North Carolina—Greensboro (NC)*	31	32	50/53	3 (102)	6 (214)	203	203	214	153	230	206	8 (231)	50	92
172. Northeastern University (MA)	30	12	77/70	-7 (212)	72 (124)	200	106	31	141	146	138	20 (70)	117	79
173. Texas Christian University (TX)	30	11	66/69	3 (100)	4 (221)	141	208	179	153	122	13	15 (114)	138	138
174. Seton Hall University (NJ)	30	24	57/61	4 (79)	3 (225)	193	213	214	153	118	30	10 (199)	138	138
175. San Diego State University (CA)*	29	19	53/61	8 (38)	66 (128)	219	236	207	153	109	175	27 (28)	138	138
176. University of Texas—Arlington (TX)*	29	33	53/36	-17 (251)	33 (163)	238	102	128	153	214	67	12 (169)	38	42
177. Oral Roberts University (OK)	29	34	54/54	0 (133)	0 (243)	161	241	214	153	81	235	14 (123)	138	138
178. University of Mississippi (MS)*	28	18	55/56	1 (121)	58 (133)	185	157	88	153	233	22	20 (67)	138	138
179. Univ. of Massachusetts—Lowell (MA)*	28	22	56/51	-5 (191)	35 (162)	248	169	214	153	205	204	21 (63)	111	16
180. University of Denver (CO)	28	12	70/74	4 (88)	10 (201)	101	169	214	153	36	190	12 (156)	138	100
181. U. of Maryland—Baltimore County (MD)*	28	15	68/59	-9 (223)	67 (127)	73	110	115	153	117	149	21 (58)	112	68
182. George Mason University (VA)*	28	20	60/61	1 (116)	58 (132)	214	74	94	114	126	68	10 (209)	138	138
183. Oklahoma State University (OK)*	28	22	61/60	-1 (142)	101 (108)	146	114	169	112	116	153	17 (91)	138	138
184. Ball State University (IN)*	28	23	52/60	8 (40)	8 (210)	194	196	206	153	165	165	10 (195)	113	122
185. University of Oklahoma (OK)*	28	20	65/62	-3 (176)	81 (117)	100	86	127	133	159	35	9 (217)	138	138
186. Virginia Commonwealth Univ. (VA)*	27	23	56/49	-7 (209)	134 (92)	221	100	156	109	171	166	15 (115)	76	66
187. Old Dominion University (VA)*	27	21	54/49	-5 (196)	52 (141)	218	147	195	153	184	7	16 (105)	138	138
188. Kansas State University (KS)*	27	23	57/58	1 (117)	124 (99)	163	94	212	153	104	55	7 (252)	138	138
189. New Jersey Inst. of Tech. (NJ)*	27	27	61/55	-6 (208)	89 (114)	237	142	65	79	241	240	10 (196)	124	62
190. University of New Mexico (NM)*	27	26	50/44	-6 (201)	177 (81)	152	98	103	108	150	56	19 (77)	138	138
191. University of Rhode Island (RI)*	27	19	52/58	6 (63)	76 (121)	173	140	214	101	162	136	10 (204)	96	90
192. Pacific University (OR)	27	23	57/67	10 (25)	1 (236)	150	241	214	153	98	243	11 (192)	138	138
193. Georgia State University (GA)*	27	34	55/44	-11 (229)	51 (143)	216	93	187	153	177	177	15 (107)	104	119
194. Louisiana St. U.—Baton Rouge (LA)*	27	15	66/61	-5 (189)	261 (57)	134	71	180	152	168	176	12 (177)	91	57
195. University of Toledo (OH)*	27	30	50/45	-5 (190)	52 (140)	212	124	161	153	198	93	16 (103)	137	95
196. Colorado School of Mines (CO)*	27	14	76/68	-8 (218)	30 (165)	34	174	214	41	139	85	23 (43)	138	138
197. South Dakota State University (SD)*	27	28	52/51	-1 (143)	39 (153)	166	196	190	153	180	31	11 (183)	138	138
198. University of Cincinnati (OH)*	27	22	59/46	-13 (240)	376 (34)	188	55	164	88	128	135	11 (178)	106	69
199. George Fox University (OR)	27	19	57/62	5 (75)	0 (243)	147	241	214	153	33	243	18 (82)	138	138
200. Texas A&M Univ.—Commerce (TX)*	27	42	39/36	-3 (172)	2 (232)	220	231	214	153	237	233	25 (38)	138	138
201. Kent State University (OH)*	26	28	47/49	2 (114)	19 (184)	201	119	107	138	173	124	8 (229)	121	131
202. New Mexico State University (NM)*	26	33	45/43	-2 (165)	148 (86)	142	146	114	153	186	83	9 (213)	138	138
203. Texas Woman's University (TX)*	26	39	41/46	5 (72)	2 (226)	209	154	214	153	248	230	11 (189)	138	138
204. Central Michigan University (MI)*	26	22	50/57	7 (52)	5 (219)	226	221	214	153	182	112	10 (202)	61	138
205. Univ. of Missouri—Kansas City (MO)*	26	30	58/44	-14 (248)	27 (167)	229	157	98	153	203	207	19 (72)	85	56
206. University of Tennessee (TN)*	26	19	65/60	-5 (197)	236 (61)	130	65	145	146	132	106	14 (128)	138	138
207. Stevens Institute of Tech. (NJ)	26	17	75/79	4 (91)	26 (173)	127	198	214	86	197	200	13 (130)	138	138
208. University of Wyoming (WY)*	26	14	57/53	-4 (186)	80 (118)	98	149	184	125	170	59	25 (36)	94	118
209. University of Utah (UT)*	26	12	60/51	-9 (219)	248 (60)	93	51	96	74	131	140	10 (207)	53	61
210. Univ. of Massachusetts—Boston (MA)*	26	38	45/32	-13 (236)	26 (172)	222	203	112	117	238	231	21 (62)	56	126
211. Cleveland State University (OH)*	25	50	39/26	-13 (245)	16 (190)	198	187	35	153	169	222	9 (214)	138	138
212. Adelphi University (NY)	25	24	54/64	10 (28)	1 (240)	227	201	214	153	210	208	13 (138)	138	138

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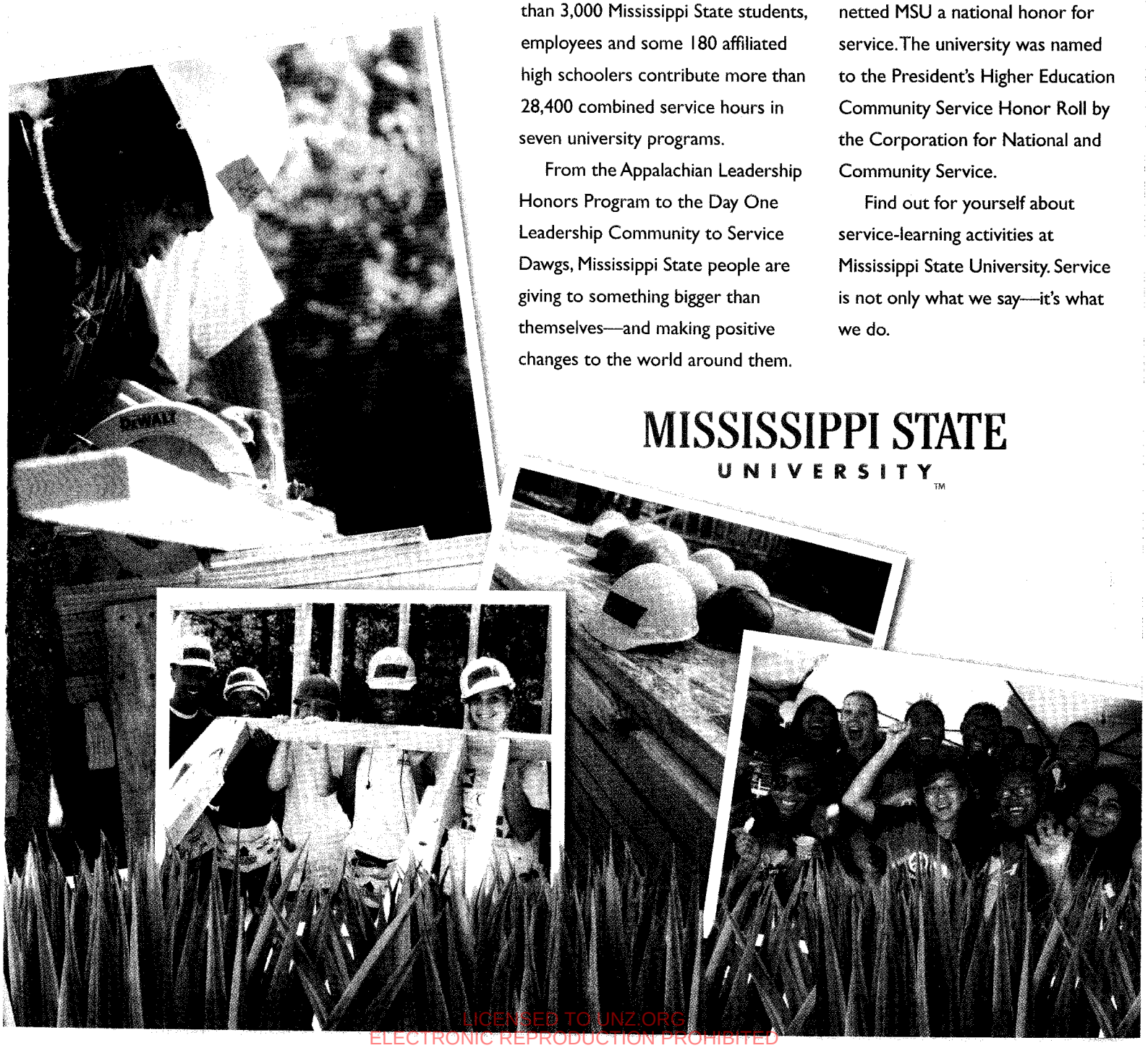

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

			SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH					SERVICE				
		OVERALL SCORE	% of students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	PhDs awarded rank	Faculty awards rank	National Academies membership rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
213.	Missouri U. of Sci. & Tech. (MO)*	24	20	74/61	-13 (237)	30 (164)	39	128	214	104	207	44	19 (73)	138	138
214.	University of North Dakota (ND)*	24	17	57/54	-3 (175)	63 (130)	155	169	150	153	209	20	18 (81)	138	138
215.	Andrews University (MI)	24	27	52/53	1 (123)	1 (234)	46	236	214	153	79	243	11 (180)	138	138
216.	Illinois State University (IL)*	23	15	59/70	11 (20)	5 (218)	179	210	214	153	153	131	10 (193)	138	138
217.	University of the Pacific (CA)	23	23	64/60	-4 (187)	4 (220)	170	217	214	116	53	243	16 (98)	138	138
218.	Samford University (AL)	23	10	62/77	15 (6)	0 (243)	60	241	214	153	124	137	4 (254)	138	138
219.	New School (NY)	23	22	59/62	3 (101)	8 (211)	258	140	79	153	107	242	7 (244)	138	138
220.	Barry University (FL)	23	39	37/41	4 (82)	0 (243)	199	225	144	153	250	234	7 (247)	138	138
221.	Texas Tech University (TX)*	23	19	59/57	-2 (167)	58 (134)	162	91	92	145	167	116	7 (242)	128	130
222.	University of Northern Colorado (CO)*	23	18	53/50	-3 (170)	2 (228)	172	198	173	153	42	158	23 (40)	138	138
223.	University of Hartford (CT)	22	19	53/54	1 (124)	2 (227)	239	241	152	153	112	210	8 (232)	126	45
224.	University of Central Florida (FL)*	22	16	67/63	-4 (178)	112 (104)	202	78	29	149	192	164	10 (203)	138	138
225.	Western Michigan University (MI)*	22	20	52/55	3 (107)	17 (185)	157	144	137	153	123	100	7 (243)	135	138
226.	University of Hawaii—Manoa (HI)*	21	18	57/51	-6 (205)	266 (56)	139	80	100	77	134	92	9 (212)	138	138
227.	Southern Methodist Univ. (TX)	21	9	75/74	-1 (140)	13 (197)	106	169	146	98	106	227	17 (97)	138	138
228.	Indiana U.–Purdue U.—Indianapolis (IN)*	21	25	47/33	-14 (247)	185 (80)	256	241	151	99	221	151	21 (61)	118	29
229.	University of South Florida (FL)*	20	19	62/48	-14 (249)	273 (54)	181	70	66	126	188	90	19 (80)	138	138
230.	Northern Arizona University (AZ)*	20	21	53/53	0 (134)	27 (170)	184	217	202	153	74	130	10 (201)	138	138
231.	University of Nevada—Reno (NV)*	19	12	53/48	-5 (195)	96 (112)	171	129	111	139	90	126	28 (22)	138	138
232.	University of Tulsa (OK)	19	14	76/63	-13 (242)	15 (191)	70	203	214	64	102	243	9 (223)	57	99
233.	Univ. of Arkansas—Little Rock (AR)*	19	47	44/21	-23 (256)	10 (203)	244	225	183	123	202	217	25 (37)	138	138
234.	University of West Florida (FL)*	18	23	54/44	-10 (228)	5 (217)	186	241	147	153	178	46	18 (85)	138	138
235.	Florida Atlantic University (FL)*	18	23	50/39	-11 (231)	27 (168)	207	166	82	110	235	185	22 (47)	129	112
236.	Nova Southeastern University (FL)	18	35	47/41	-6 (203)	7 (213)	253	147	157	153	250	243	13 (149)	138	138
237.	University of Houston (TX)*	18	34	52/42	-10 (226)	74 (123)	228	69	139	72	243	168	1 (256)	138	138
238.	University of Arkansas (AR)*	18	17	65/58	-7 (213)	101 (109)	131	105	181	122	142	108	10 (208)	138	138
239.	Univ. of Missouri—St. Louis (MO)*	18	32	56/46	-10 (227)	11 (200)	223	176	129	153	231	220	12 (159)	138	138
240.	University of Texas—Dallas (TX)*	17	19	75/59	-16 (250)	46 (148)	149	110	178	71	141	238	20 (68)	138	138
241.	University of Akron (OH)*	17	32	46/34	-12 (233)	27 (166)	249	109	53	103	199	109	7 (241)	138	138
242.	Louisiana Tech University (LA)*	17	17	55/47	-8 (217)	14 (194)	191	187	121	153	234	215	17 (89)	122	40
243.	Immaculata University (PA)	16	25	38/47	9 (36)	0 (243)	231	241	214	153	250	243	13 (142)	138	138
244.	St. Mary's Univ. of Minnesota (MN)	16	22	55/57	2 (109)	0 (243)	236	236	214	153	193	198	8 (233)	138	138
245.	Univ. of Alabama—Huntsville (AL)*	14	23	61/48	-13 (239)	70 (125)	208	166	141	153	220	101	13 (150)	138	138
246.	North Dakota State University (ND)*	14	22	52/47	-5 (199)	106 (107)	132	132	131	153	228	161	7 (250)	138	138
247.	University of Louisiana—Lafayette (LA)*	13	29	50/40	-10 (224)	52 (142)	240	194	214	153	246	192	17 (88)	138	138
248.	Georgia Southern University (GA)*	13	23	58/45	-13 (246)	2 (229)	246	241	214	153	211	57	17 (93)	138	138
249.	University of Colorado—Denver (CO)*	11	27	50/37	-13 (238)	0 (243)	257	213	200	94	137	209	17 (96)	138	138
250.	Univ. of Wisconsin—Milwaukee (WI)*	11	21	48/42	-6 (204)	40 (150)	215	123	209	143	172	213	16 (99)	138	138
251.	Idaho State University (ID)*	11	40	45/26	-19 (255)	20 (182)	160	182	214	153	227	172	9 (218)	138	138
252.	University of North Texas (TX)*	11	17	58/45	-13 (244)	14 (193)	205	114	140	140	160	189	12 (157)	84	132
253.	Long Island U.—C.W. Post (NY)	11	24	47/41	-6 (200)	1 (233)	247	235	143	153	217	237	15 (116)	138	138
254.	Trevecca Nazarene Univ. (TN)	9	25	50/49	-1 (144)	0 (243)	254	241	214	153	250	194	0 (257)	138	138
255.	Oakland University (MI)*	5	20	50/44	-6 (207)	9 (206)	245	198	177	153	236	243	8 (236)	138	138
256.	Wichita State University (KS)*	4	24	57/39	-18 (253)	47 (146)	183	184	214	153	242	243	15 (117)	138	138
257.	University of New Orleans (LA)*	1	32	47/22	-25 (257)	19 (183)	204	160	174	153	218	219	11 (191)	138	138
258.	University of Alaska—Fairbanks (AK)*	0	18	50/23	-27 (258)	152 (84)	235	187	191	131	136	95	22 (53)	138	138

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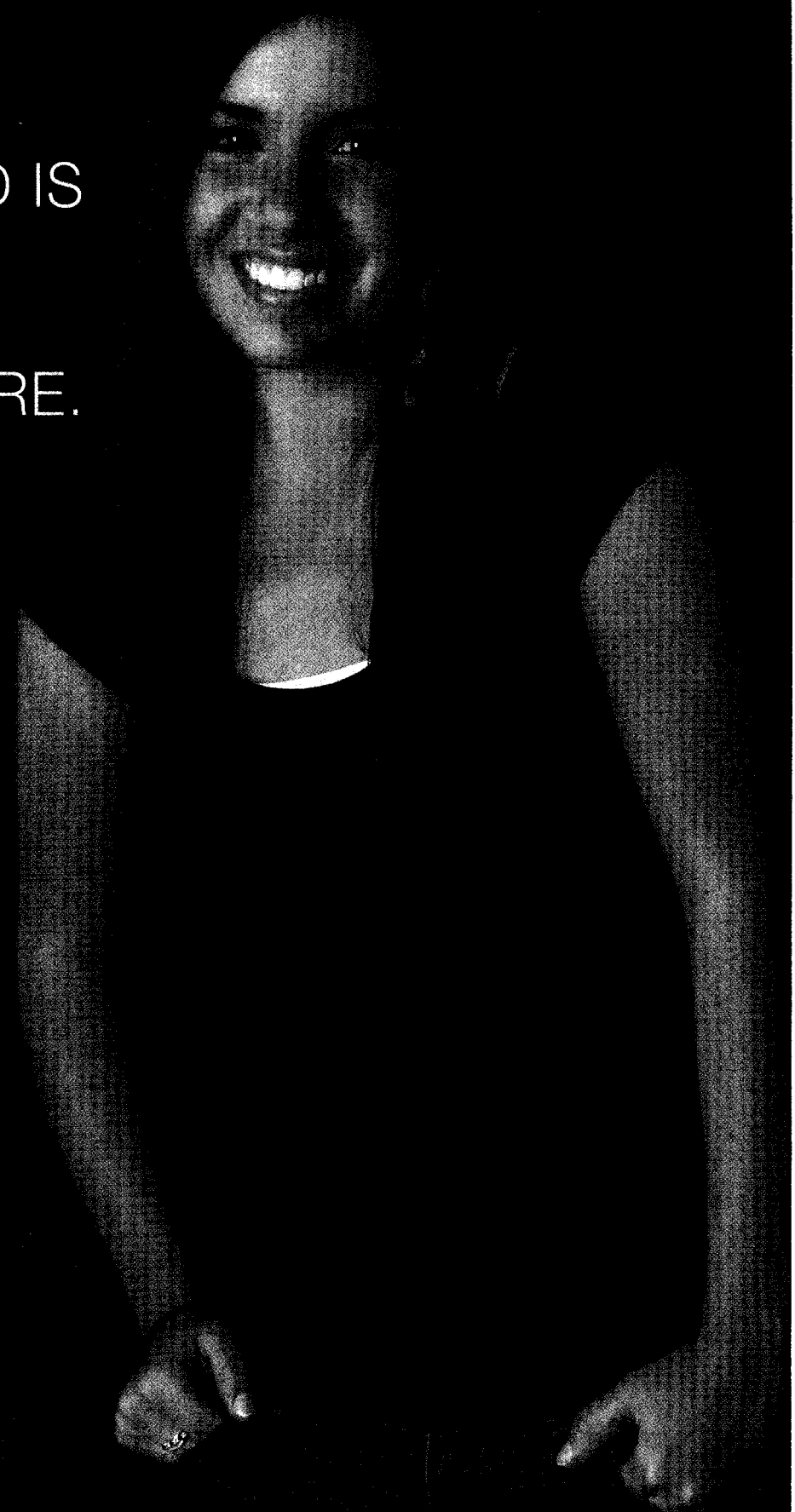

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LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

*Public institution

			SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH		SERVICE				
		OVERALL SCORE	% students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in thousands (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
1.	Morehouse College (GA)	100	65	45/67	22 (3)	5445 (5)	101	164	7	11 (152)	41	33
2.	Bryn Mawr College (PA)	94	14	82/86	4 (87)	3881 (9)	7	83	125	35 (10)	10	10
3.	Swarthmore College (PA)	89	10	94/92	-2 (161)	1449 (35)	2	45	125	9 (178)	34	31
4.	Berea College (KY)	89	82	45/64	19 (5)	0 (95)	139	79	125	10 (166)	13	25
5.	Amherst College (MA)	85	16	91/95	4 (91)	2926 (14)	5	31	125	36 (6)	104	101
6.	Harvey Mudd College (CA)	80	10	99/90	-9 (210)	2739 (18)	1	95	83	25 (24)	104	101
7.	Williams College (MA)	79	14	92/96	4 (86)	3983 (8)	9	4	125	9 (181)	104	101
8.	Spelman College (GA)	77	45	54/80	26 (1)	3741 (10)	45	117	21	10 (162)	104	101
9.	Wesleyan University (CT)	77	12	90/93	3 (101)	7878 (2)	15	46	102	12 (128)	101	91
10.	Wellesley College (MA)	76	13	87/91	4 (95)	4634 (7)	10	63	70	23 (34)	104	101
11.	Bowdoin College (ME)	76	13	91/91	0 (142)	2186 (22)	20	16	125	19 (56)	31	73
12.	Carleton College (MN)	75	10	91/93	2 (118)	1852 (28)	6	33	125	12 (124)	92	52
13.	Reed College (OR)	73	11	89/78	-11 (224)	1220 (36)	3	1	125	16 (81)	104	101
14.	Tougaloo College (MS)	73	100	50/47	-3 (173)	1675 (32)	91	201	59	9 (182)	54	84
15.	College of the Holy Cross (MA)	72	14	78/98	20 (4)	987 (48)	89	136	25	19 (61)	11	38
16.	Whitman College (WA)	71	13	83/92	9 (43)	299 (82)	21	10	125	35 (11)	97	97
17.	Occidental College (CA)	71	19	78/86	8 (48)	1652 (33)	30	119	110	21 (48)	20	34
18.	Davidson College (NC)	71	6	89/94	5 (73)	852 (52)	22	70	38	15 (95)	3	62
19.	Bates College (ME)	71	10	86/89	3 (105)	1020 (46)	36	64	125	21 (43)	9	9
20.	Smith College (MA)	71	16	79/88	9 (39)	3498 (11)	16	22	121	17 (72)	104	101
21.	Emory and Henry College (VA)	70	42	49/55	6 (70)	0 (95)	104	168	125	11 (146)	1	1
22.	Macalester College (MN)	69	14	87/87	0 (140)	2349 (20)	14	3	112	12 (135)	104	101
23.	Wofford College (SC)	67	11	73/83	10 (30)	0 (95)	151	94	2	7 (215)	6	30
24.	Pomona College (CA)	66	12	97/95	-2 (158)	3108 (13)	8	102	105	7 (211)	104	101
25.	Centre College (KY)	65	13	78/82	4 (94)	0 (95)	38	58	20	17 (78)	30	22
26.	Oberlin College (OH)	65	12	87/84	-3 (169)	773 (55)	23	32	125	22 (40)	47	57
27.	Dillard University (LA)	64	75	27/39	12 (21)	2846 (15)	138	109	23	0 (245)	104	101
28.	Rhodes College (TN)	64	9	79/72	-7 (206)	432 (69)	70	42	39	8 (201)	2	2
29.	Fisk University (TN)	63	46	42/53	11 (24)	6000 (4)	33	201	62	7 (231)	104	101
30.	New College of Florida (FL)*	63	14	82/63	-19 (244)	0 (95)	4	201	125	84 (1)	104	101
31.	Middlebury College (VT)	63	10	91/93	2 (109)	1830 (29)	32	13	100	21 (49)	104	101
32.	Ripon College (WI)	62	26	60/69	9 (40)	0 (95)	110	66	12	14 (102)	43	18

OVERALL SCORE: Overall score represents the combined score of our three metrics—social mobility, research, and service—where the highest is 100 and the lowest is zero. Each metric is weighted equally.

SOCIAL MOBILITY: The first column shows the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants. The second shows the predicted rate of graduation, based on incoming SAT scores and Pell Grant percentages, versus the actual rate of graduation. The third shows the difference between the actual graduation rate and the predicted graduation rate—a measure of how well the school performs as an engine of social mobility (see "A Note on Methodology," p. 86)—arrived at by subtracting the latter from the former. (The higher the number, the better; negative numbers indicate subpar performance.) Rank follows in parentheses.

RESEARCH: The first column shows the number of dollars (in thousands) in total research expenditures. Rank follows in parentheses. The second shows the school's ranking in the number of bachelor's recipients who go on to receive PhDs, relative to school size.

SERVICE: The first column ranks the school by the number of alumni who go on to serve in the Peace Corps, relative to school size. The second column ranks the school by percentage of students who serve in ROTC. The third gives the percentage of funds in federal work-study money that goes to community service (versus non–community service); rank follows in parentheses. The fourth column shows the school's rank on a combined measure of the number of students participating in community service and the total number of service hours performed, both relative to school size. The fifth column shows the school's rank on a combined measure of the number of staff supporting community service, relative to the total number of staff; the number of academic courses that incorporate service, relative to school size; and whether the institution provides scholarships for community service.

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LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

			SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH		SERVICE				
		OVERALL SCORE	% students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in thousands (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
33.	Haverford College (PA)	62	12	90/94	4 (84)	1182 (37)	12	103	125	16 (85)	104	101
34.	Grinnell College (IA)	62	14	85/85	0 (143)	787 (53)	13	9	125	7 (233)	104	101
35.	Colby College (ME)	62	6	88/90	2 (120)	1131 (38)	28	30	75	23 (35)	90	83
36.	Allegheny College (PA)	61	18	73/74	1 (128)	787 (53)	46	44	125	24 (28)	35	32
37.	Knox College (IL)	61	21	80/75	-5 (189)	0 (95)	27	68	125	36 (8)	68	96
38.	Westminster College (PA)	61	20	59/73	14 (12)	0 (95)	85	123	125	38 (5)	46	17
39.	Bucknell University (PA)	60	8	84/88	4 (85)	1744 (30)	40	85	44	9 (186)	26	63
40.	Furman University (SC)	60	8	81/85	4 (90)	1042 (44)	50	92	10	22 (38)	95	98
41.	Alma College (MI)	60	28	60/70	10 (33)	0 (95)	88	185	101	9 (193)	4	13
42.	Mount Holyoke College (MA)	60	16	82/82	0 (146)	3127 (12)	29	26	116	11 (141)	104	101
43.	Agnes Scott College (GA)	60	30	65/71	6 (65)	0 (95)	43	12	84	13 (111)	96	100
44.	DePauw University (IN)	59	16	73/85	12 (20)	221 (88)	129	43	118	17 (71)	17	41
45.	St. John's University (MN)	59	11	70/83	13 (17)	0 (95)	102	47	3	18 (63)	104	101
46.	St. Olaf College (MN)	59	12	82/86	4 (88)	1060 (42)	52	15	125	7 (229)	58	64
47.	Wesleyan College (GA)	59	33	58/61	3 (103)	0 (95)	64	142	125	33 (14)	99	15
48.	Colgate University (NY)	59	7	89/91	2 (114)	2217 (21)	37	27	80	23 (37)	104	101
49.	Illinois College (IL)	59	29	61/63	2 (123)	0 (95)	109	50	125	11 (139)	24	7
50.	St. John's College (MD)	58	18	80/71	-9 (211)	0 (95)	11	2	125	9 (189)	104	101
51.	Ohio Wesleyan University (OH)	58	20	70/63	-7 (200)	376 (76)	39	60	125	29 (18)	25	43
52.	Lawrence University (WI)	58	15	82/75	-7 (197)	301 (81)	17	35	125	8 (202)	64	49
53.	Susquehanna University (PA)	57	17	65/82	17 (7)	0 (95)	154	78	43	27 (22)	28	78
54.	Claremont McKenna College (CA)	57	13	90/94	4 (92)	678 (59)	57	75	16	13 (110)	104	101
55.	University of Richmond (VA)	57	9	80/87	7 (57)	1958 (26)	96	96	31	14 (106)	59	70
56.	Gustavus Adolphus Col. (MN)	57	15	73/83	10 (34)	173 (93)	59	51	45	14 (97)	61	72
57.	Hamilton College (NY)	57	9	89/91	2 (119)	1907 (27)	73	81	125	14 (99)	93	35
58.	Vassar College (NY)	56	12	89/92	3 (99)	600 (61)	18	72	120	17 (75)	104	101
59.	Simpson College (IA)	56	26	64/68	4 (77)	0 (95)	176	148	125	11 (143)	8	3
60.	Hobart & Wm. Smith Col. (NY)	56	15	73/73	0 (138)	685 (58)	103	23	114	25 (26)	40	60
61.	Connecticut College (CT)	56	9	85/88	3 (98)	1020 (46)	31	11	125	15 (90)	104	101
62.	Coe College (IA)	56	24	67/70	3 (104)	445 (67)	72	145	17	23 (36)	78	95
63.	Dickinson College (PA)	56	9	82/84	2 (115)	1076 (41)	118	49	19	11 (153)	37	71
64.	Wheaton College (IL)	56	13	82/86	4 (83)	0 (95)	48	121	9	18 (64)	104	101
65.	Calif. State U.—Monterey Bay (CA)*	55	32	49/39	-10 (217)	7032 (3)	229	167	125	22 (42)	49	8
66.	Johnson C. Smith University (NC)	55	57	40/39	-1 (150)	0 (95)	206	201	27	23 (32)	38	76
67.	Barnard College (NY)	55	15	85/89	4 (89)	2764 (17)	47	139	119	17 (74)	104	101
68.	Earlham College (IN)	55	16	74/72	-2 (157)	0 (95)	24	56	125	16 (87)	32	79
69.	Beloit College (WI)	54	14	76/78	2 (125)	0 (95)	68	38	125	13 (113)	23	48
70.	Willamette University (OR)	54	15	75/71	-4 (177)	377 (75)	86	8	111	16 (84)	33	80
71.	Carson-Newman College (TN)	54	31	56/53	-3 (168)	0 (95)	162	201	6	10 (170)	27	40
72.	Calvin College (MI)	54	19	69/76	7 (56)	2063 (24)	71	138	54	7 (216)	81	55
73.	Central College (IA)	53	25	62/68	6 (67)	0 (95)	131	129	125	7 (223)	12	11
74.	Denison University (OH)	53	11	79/81	2 (112)	321 (80)	92	29	115	13 (109)	50	44
75.	Kenyon College (OH)	53	7	86/88	2 (121)	0 (95)	19	21	125	14 (105)	104	101
76.	St. Mary's Col. of Maryland (MD)*	53	10	76/75	-1 (155)	415 (72)	63	6	113	15 (91)	62	74

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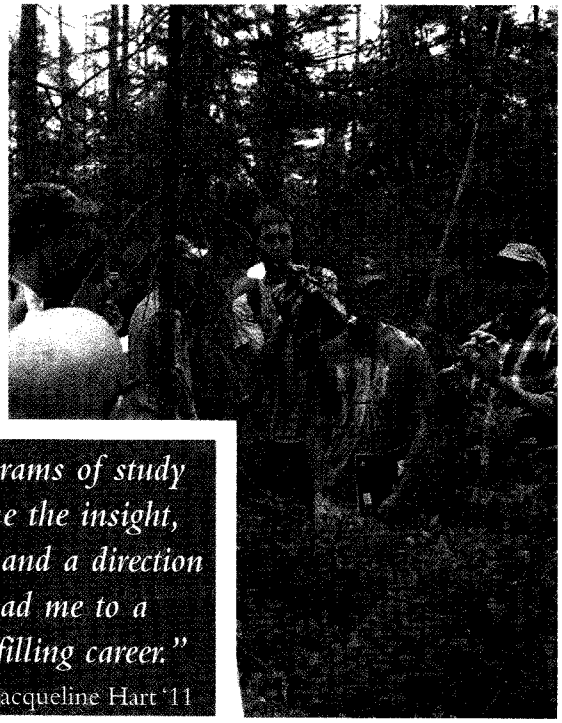

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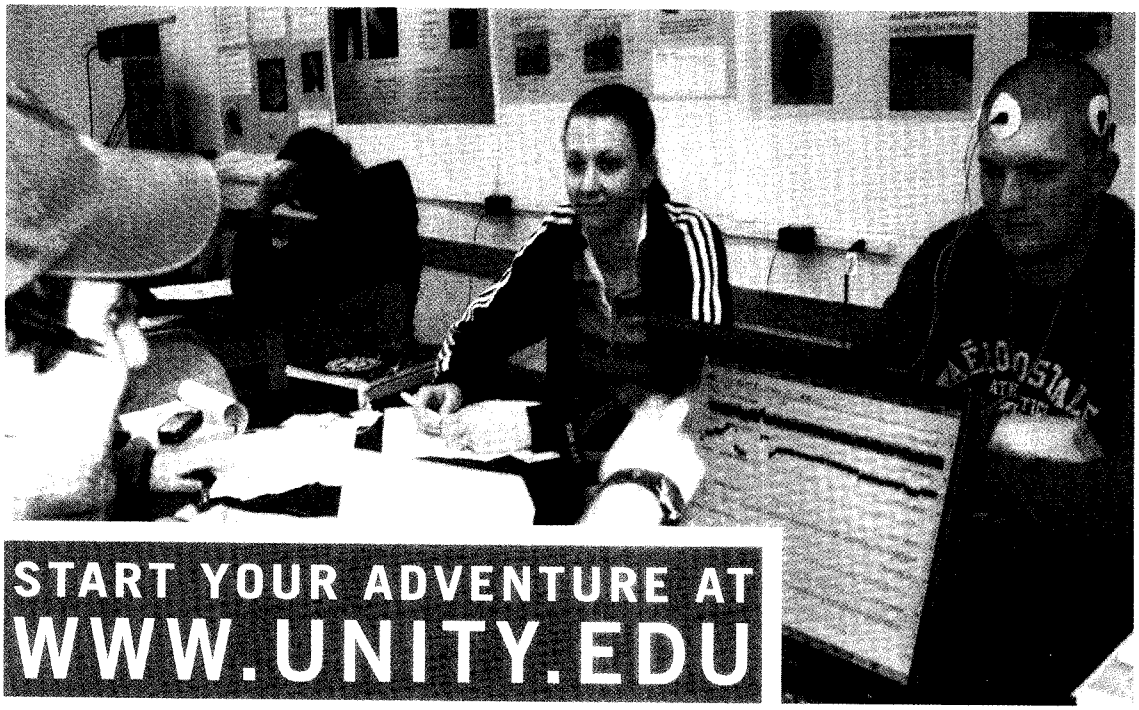

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LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

		OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH		SERVICE				
			% students receiving Pell Grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research expenditures in thousands (rank)	Bachelor's to PhD rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	Community service participation and hours served rank	Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
77.	Juniata College (PA)	52	18	71/80	9 (38)	332 (78)	42	189	125	9 (184)	60	39
78.	Wartburg College (IA)	52	25	62/64	2 (122)	0 (95)	160	73	125	7 (235)	22	6
79.	Union College (NY)	52	16	77/85	8 (49)	2086 (23)	126	178	52	10 (172)	87	67
80.	Kalamazoo College (MI)	52	13	78/76	-2 (165)	239 (87)	34	69	125	10 (154)	44	47
81.	Drew University (NJ)	52	21	67/77	10 (31)	0 (95)	67	131	86	21 (50)	91	86
82.	Washington and Lee University (VA)	51	3	93/89	-4 (178)	329 (79)	55	112	41	40 (4)	104	101
83.	Rust College (MS)	51	80	19/31	12 (18)	0 (95)	166	201	125	9 (183)	103	101
84.	Cornell College (IA)	51	22	71/72	1 (132)	0 (95)	53	70	125	15 (94)	48	93
85.	West Virginia State University (WV)*	51	56	36/29	-7 (198)	2765 (16)	221	201	15	32 (16)	104	101
86.	Skidmore College (NY)	51	15	78/81	3 (97)	726 (56)	90	61	123	12 (130)	88	56
87.	Bennett College (NC)	51	68	25/38	13 (14)	0 (95)	82	201	125	10 (157)	104	101
88.	Southwestern University (TX)	50	14	74/75	1 (137)	0 (95)	81	143	125	14 (107)	21	23
89.	William Jewell College (MO)	50	21	68/63	-5 (188)	0 (95)	60	181	98	16 (82)	19	20
90.	Pitzer College (CA)	50	10	79/69	-10 (218)	268 (84)	84	201	95	10 (159)	5	4
91.	McDaniel College (MD)	50	23	64/73	9 (35)	0 (95)	157	111	5	8 (208)	104	101
92.	Judson College (AL)	50	39	54/49	-5 (182)	0 (95)	184	201	28	7 (210)	74	5
93.	St. Michael's College (VT)	50	10	68/81	13 (16)	0 (95)	186	39	58	10 (160)	18	37
94.	St. Mary's College (IN)	49	14	68/76	8 (50)	0 (95)	107	106	24	14 (103)	86	51
95.	Linfield College (OR)	49	23	62/73	11 (28)	0 (95)	145	37	108	9 (188)	57	65
96.	Paine College (GA)	49	78	21/25	4 (80)	0 (95)	140	201	49	9 (176)	104	101
97.	Mount Union College (OH)	49	30	54/65	11 (25)	0 (95)	123	201	30	7 (237)	14	101
98.	Presbyterian College (SC)	49	20	65/73	8 (52)	0 (95)	177	180	4	10 (158)	104	101
99.	Colorado College (CO)	48	7	84/87	3 (108)	0 (95)	26	25	125	7 (218)	104	101
100.	College of Wooster (OH)	48	15	73/76	3 (107)	944 (50)	25	55	125	10 (165)	104	101
101.	Westminster College (MO)	48	23	68/63	-5 (180)	0 (95)	150	127	61	23 (33)	45	36
102.	Houghton College (NY)	48	32	64/72	8 (47)	0 (95)	128	89	37	7 (220)	104	101
103.	West Virginia Wesleyan College (WV)	48	27	58/59	1 (136)	0 (95)	153	201	125	12 (123)	16	12
104.	Millsaps College (MS)	47	19	70/68	-2 (163)	588 (62)	94	173	94	7 (213)	39	19
105.	Washington & Jefferson (PA)	46	19	66/73	7 (61)	0 (95)	171	77	71	22 (41)	71	85
106.	Lewis & Clark College (OR)	46	10	83/71	-12 (229)	1048 (43)	66	14	93	25 (27)	104	101
107.	Bethany College (WV)	46	39	45/63	18 (6)	0 (95)	113	107	125	13 (116)	104	101
108.	Wittenberg University (OH)	46	17	66/63	-3 (170)	0 (95)	44	125	125	15 (92)	55	24
109.	Stonehill College (MA)	46	10	73/82	9 (41)	0 (95)	158	182	51	13 (117)	36	27
110.	College of St. Benedict (MN)	46	19	69/84	15 (8)	0 (95)	165	93	125	25 (25)	104	101
111.	St. Vincent College (PA)	46	25	58/73	15 (9)	0 (95)	178	161	109	16 (86)	82	68
112.	Hollins University (VA)	46	27	64/59	-5 (185)	0 (95)	149	19	125	13 (119)	80	82
113.	Lafayette College (PA)	45	9	81/89	8 (45)	1472 (34)	83	140	48	10 (161)	104	101
114.	College of Idaho (ID)	45	20	65/67	2 (117)	0 (95)	111	34	125	33 (12)	104	101
115.	Lyon College (AR)	45	35	61/62	1 (134)	0 (95)	164	118	125	9 (179)	29	101
116.	Allen University (SC)	45	96	17/6	-11 (222)	0 (95)	229	201	65	8 (194)	104	101
117.	Sewanee—University of the South (TN)	45	12	78/77	-1 (153)	190 (92)	51	20	125	13 (115)	104	101
118.	Birmingham-Southern Col. (AL)	45	16	69/66	-3 (174)	0 (95)	100	150	57	21 (44)	65	42
119.	College of the Atlantic (ME)	45	24	72/62	-10 (215)	0 (95)	133	7	125	22 (39)	104	101
120.	St. Norbert College (WI)	45	20	63/75	12 (22)	0 (95)	115	193	14	15 (89)	104	101

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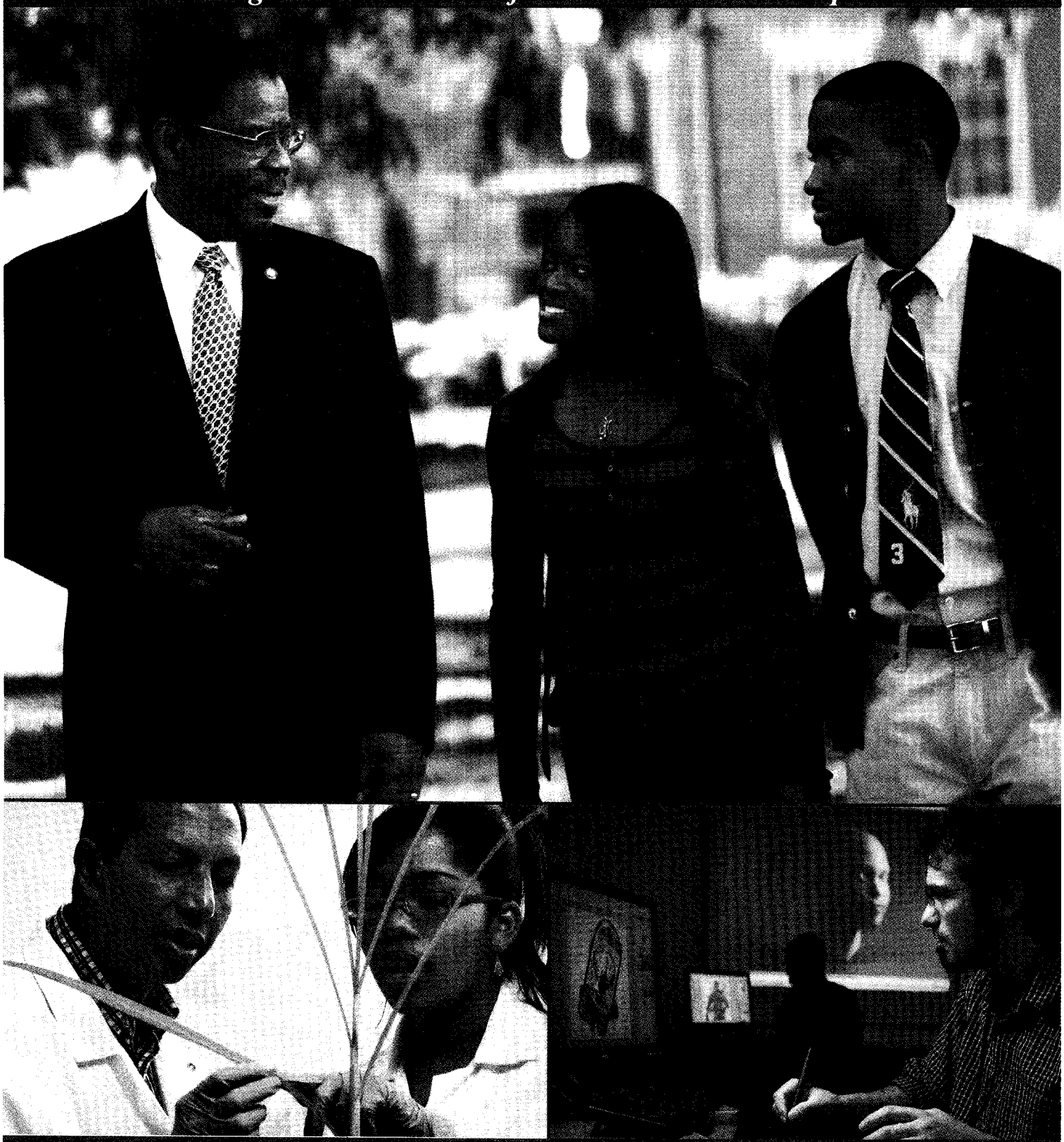

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	OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY: % students receiving Pell Grants	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	RESEARCH: Research expenditures in thousands (rank)	RESEARCH: Bachelor's to PhD rank	SERVICE: Peace Corps rank	SERVICE: ROTC rank	SERVICE: % of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	SERVICE: Community service participation and hours served rank	SERVICE: Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
121. Hastings College (NE)	45	29	56/64	8 (51)	0 (95)	191	176	125	9 (177)	42	28
122. Illinois Wesleyan University (IL)	45	13	78/83	5 (76)	856 (51)	62	76	72	10 (164)	104	101
123. Carroll College (MT)	44	22	61/61	0 (147)	0 (95)	188	40	11	20 (54)	104	101
124. Texas Lutheran University (TX)	44	28	52/52	0 (148)	0 (95)	190	152	103	68 (2)	104	101
125. Olivet College (MI)	44	54	38/36	-2 (162)	0 (95)	208	201	97	7 (232)	56	21
126. Mass. Col. of Liberal Arts (MA)*	44	29	53/57	4 (82)	0 (95)	217	156	125	26 (23)	75	26
127. Meredith College (NC)	44	25	56/66	10 (32)	0 (95)	222	172	125	28 (20)	72	66
128. Moravian College (PA)	44	23	63/76	13 (13)	0 (95)	127	162	66	8 (206)	89	94
129. University of Minnesota—Morris (MN)*	43	27	65/63	-2 (159)	0 (95)	74	53	125	18 (67)	104	101
130. Cedar Crest College (PA)	43	32	57/58	1 (129)	0 (95)	219	160	69	21 (51)	79	58
131. Virginia Military Institute (VA)*	43	11	68/74	6 (69)	659 (60)	189	186	1	5 (241)	104	101
132. Maryville College (TN)	43	30	63/51	-12 (226)	0 (95)	192	177	125	9 (192)	7	16
133. Clarke College (IA)	43	29	60/64	4 (79)	0 (95)	147	166	125	11 (142)	52	87
134. Hampshire College (MA)	43	12	78/67	-11 (223)	1118 (39)	41	18	125	13 (112)	104	101
135. Univ. of Puget Sound (WA)	43	12	77/76	-1 (151)	453 (65)	78	17	88	8 (204)	104	101
136. Centenary College of Louisiana (LA)	43	18	66/59	-7 (196)	0 (95)	87	24	125	8 (203)	51	75
137. Hope College (MI)	42	17	71/73	2 (113)	2603 (19)	125	62	106	7 (240)	104	101
138. Doane College (NE)	42	33	57/66	9 (37)	0 (95)	229	115	89	16 (79)	104	81
139. Goshen College (IN)	42	22	65/72	7 (59)	0 (95)	49	80	125	7 (227)	104	101
140. Transylvania University (KY)	42	23	69/70	1 (133)	0 (95)	80	134	73	17 (70)	104	101
141. Simpson University (CA)	42	35	55/44	-11 (220)	0 (95)	229	120	8	7 (221)	98	61
142. Hiram College (OH)	42	35	56/62	6 (68)	0 (95)	76	149	125	7 (224)	104	101
143. Oglethorpe University (GA)	42	26	65/62	-3 (175)	0 (95)	202	171	92	9 (185)	73	14
144. Pikeville College (KY)	42	61	43/36	-7 (205)	0 (95)	229	201	29	12 (132)	104	101
145. Ursinus College (PA)	41	13	76/76	0 (141)	472 (64)	117	88	125	7 (239)	67	77
146. Muhlenberg College (PA)	41	5	77/86	9 (36)	511 (63)	114	196	60	8 (209)	77	54
147. Whittier College (CA)	41	24	57/55	-2 (156)	0 (95)	108	91	64	36 (7)	104	101
148. Hendrix College (AR)	41	20	76/70	-6 (195)	375 (77)	79	116	125	20 (53)	104	101
149. Gettysburg College (PA)	41	8	83/83	0 (144)	427 (71)	77	36	87	10 (171)	104	101
150. Franklin and Marshall College (PA)	41	7	84/79	-5 (187)	1993 (25)	61	59	125	10 (163)	104	101
151. Russell Sage College (NY)	41	29	62/73	11 (23)	0 (95)	116	201	125	12 (127)	104	101
152. U. of North Carolina—Asheville (NC)*	41	17	69/60	-9 (209)	5202 (6)	143	190	125	21 (47)	104	101
153. Asbury College (KY)	41	21	63/71	8 (53)	0 (95)	121	187	40	19 (60)	104	101
154. Huston-Tillotson University (TX)	41	76	26/16	-10 (213)	0 (95)	215	201	26	7 (228)	104	101
155. Wabash College (IN)	41	19	68/70	2 (111)	445 (67)	35	52	125	0 (245)	104	101
156. Salem College (NC)	41	36	56/53	-3 (172)	0 (95)	169	153	67	27 (21)	104	101
157. Nebraska Wesleyan University (NE)	40	28	65/65	0 (139)	0 (95)	120	99	50	10 (155)	104	101
158. Kentucky Wesleyan College (KY)	40	53	48/40	-8 (208)	0 (95)	180	201	125	24 (29)	104	101
159. Talladega College (AL)	40	68	31/29	-2 (164)	0 (95)	179	201	125	10 (167)	104	101
160. Lane College (TN)	40	69	29/32	3 (102)	0 (95)	229	201	91	8 (199)	104	101
161. Pine Manor College (MA)	40	59	27/35	8 (44)	0 (95)	229	201	125	24 (30)	104	101
162. Siena College (NY)	40	16	66/80	14 (11)	447 (66)	173	197	34	14 (100)	104	101
163. St. Lawrence University (NY)	40	17	73/76	3 (100)	0 (95)	124	67	42	7 (234)	104	101
164. Austin College (TX)	40	22	73/78	5 (75)	0 (95)	132	108	125	9 (187)	104	101

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165. Lindsey Wilson College (KY)	40	59	40/30	-10 (219)	0 (95)	229	201	125	16 (83)	69	90
166. Albion College (MI)	40	14	68/73	5 (74)	0 (95)	141	97	125	15 (93)	66	89
167. Augustana College (IL)	40	15	70/75	5 (71)	212 (91)	97	54	125	13 (118)	104	101
168. Gordon College (MA)	39	17	69/75	6 (62)	0 (95)	161	82	33	10 (173)	104	101
169. Bloomfield College (NJ)	39	64	28/36	8 (46)	0 (95)	229	201	125	9 (191)	104	101
170. Westmont College (CA)	39	15	74/80	6 (64)	0 (95)	137	184	56	17 (76)	104	101
171. Trinity College (CT)	39	10	82/86	4 (78)	951 (49)	99	137	125	7 (217)	104	101
172. Concordia College (NY)	39	30	42/43	1 (131)	0 (95)	229	151	125	61 (3)	104	101
173. Monmouth College (IL)	38	28	56/67	11 (29)	0 (95)	172	147	55	12 (131)	104	101
174. Scripps College (CA)	38	5	88/83	-5 (186)	0 (95)	54	57	125	11 (151)	104	101
175. Luther College (IA)	38	17	71/72	1 (130)	0 (95)	56	141	125	12 (129)	104	101
176. Wheaton College (MA)	38	21	76/81	5 (72)	0 (95)	135	201	125	9 (190)	104	101
177. Huntingdon College (AL)	37	34	51/55	4 (93)	0 (95)	156	201	35	13 (120)	104	101
178. Northland College (WI)	37	38	59/57	-2 (160)	0 (95)	185	86	125	7 (236)	104	101
179. Guilford College (NC)	37	21	63/58	-5 (190)	0 (95)	167	146	122	18 (65)	84	46
180. Univ. of Maine—Presque Isle (ME)*	37	53	38/42	4 (81)	0 (95)	216	188	125	11 (149)	104	101
181. Lycoming College (PA)	37	22	58/71	13 (15)	0 (95)	144	113	79	10 (156)	104	101
182. Wisconsin Lutheran College (WI)	37	27	60/66	6 (66)	0 (95)	170	100	125	12 (122)	104	101
183. Concordia Col.—Moorhead (MN)	37	19	67/66	-1 (154)	0 (95)	134	104	46	18 (66)	104	101
184. Marlboro College (VT)	37	18	74/64	-10 (212)	0 (95)	58	84	125	15 (88)	104	101
185. Eastern Mennonite Univ. (VA)	37	28	56/65	9 (42)	0 (95)	105	170	125	8 (200)	104	101
186. SUNY College—Old Westbury (NY)*	36	47	48/38	-10 (214)	1682 (31)	224	198	125	7 (230)	70	101
187. Sterling College (KS)	36	47	45/51	6 (63)	0 (95)	229	201	125	11 (144)	104	101
188. Stephens College (MO)	36	34	55/57	2 (116)	0 (95)	199	165	125	19 (55)	104	101
189. St. Andrews Presb. Col. (NC)	36	18	53/54	1 (126)	0 (95)	106	41	125	30 (17)	104	101
190. University of Hawaii—Hilo (HI)*	36	27	48/32	-16 (238)	7926 (1)	193	132	107	19 (57)	104	101
191. Lake Forest College (IL)	35	18	70/66	-4 (179)	386 (74)	148	28	125	8 (198)	104	101
192. Randolph College (VA)	35	22	64/67	3 (106)	0 (95)	119	201	125	18 (62)	104	101
193. Wells College (NY)	35	30	60/55	-5 (183)	0 (95)	98	134	125	12 (133)	104	101
194. Albright College (PA)	35	28	52/64	12 (19)	0 (95)	175	195	117	14 (98)	104	101
195. McPherson College (KS)	35	28	53/48	-5 (184)	0 (95)	229	201	125	23 (31)	53	50
196. Bethel College (KS)	35	26	60/61	1 (135)	0 (95)	203	201	125	8 (207)	85	53
197. Univ. of Wisconsin—Green Bay (WI)*	35	23	58/55	-3 (167)	1031 (45)	211	183	99	35 (9)	104	101
198. Wingate University (NC)	34	31	53/53	0 (145)	0 (95)	214	201	104	11 (150)	76	69
199. Green Mountain College (VT)	34	33	54/47	-7 (203)	0 (95)	229	65	125	29 (19)	104	101
200. Hampden-Sydney Col. (VA)	34	14	67/62	-5 (181)	0 (95)	142	98	13	12 (126)	104	101
201. Millikin University (IL)	34	25	55/63	8 (55)	0 (95)	152	154	125	14 (101)	104	101
202. Washington College (MD)	34	11	69/80	11 (26)	0 (95)	159	87	125	10 (174)	104	101
203. St. Anselm College (NH)	33	11	65/76	11 (27)	0 (95)	122	122	77	11 (145)	104	101
204. Jarvis Christian College (TX)	33	76	22/10	-12 (225)	0 (95)	229	201	125	11 (147)	104	101
205. Berry College (GA)	33	23	64/61	-3 (176)	240 (86)	168	133	125	18 (68)	104	101
206. Georgetown College (KY)	32	23	63/57	-6 (193)	0 (95)	146	114	32	8 (195)	104	101
207. Bard College (NY)	32	12	89/75	-14 (232)	278 (83)	65	201	125	7 (225)	104	101
208. Hartwick College (NY)	32	26	60/55	-5 (191)	0 (95)	136	126	125	15 (96)	104	101

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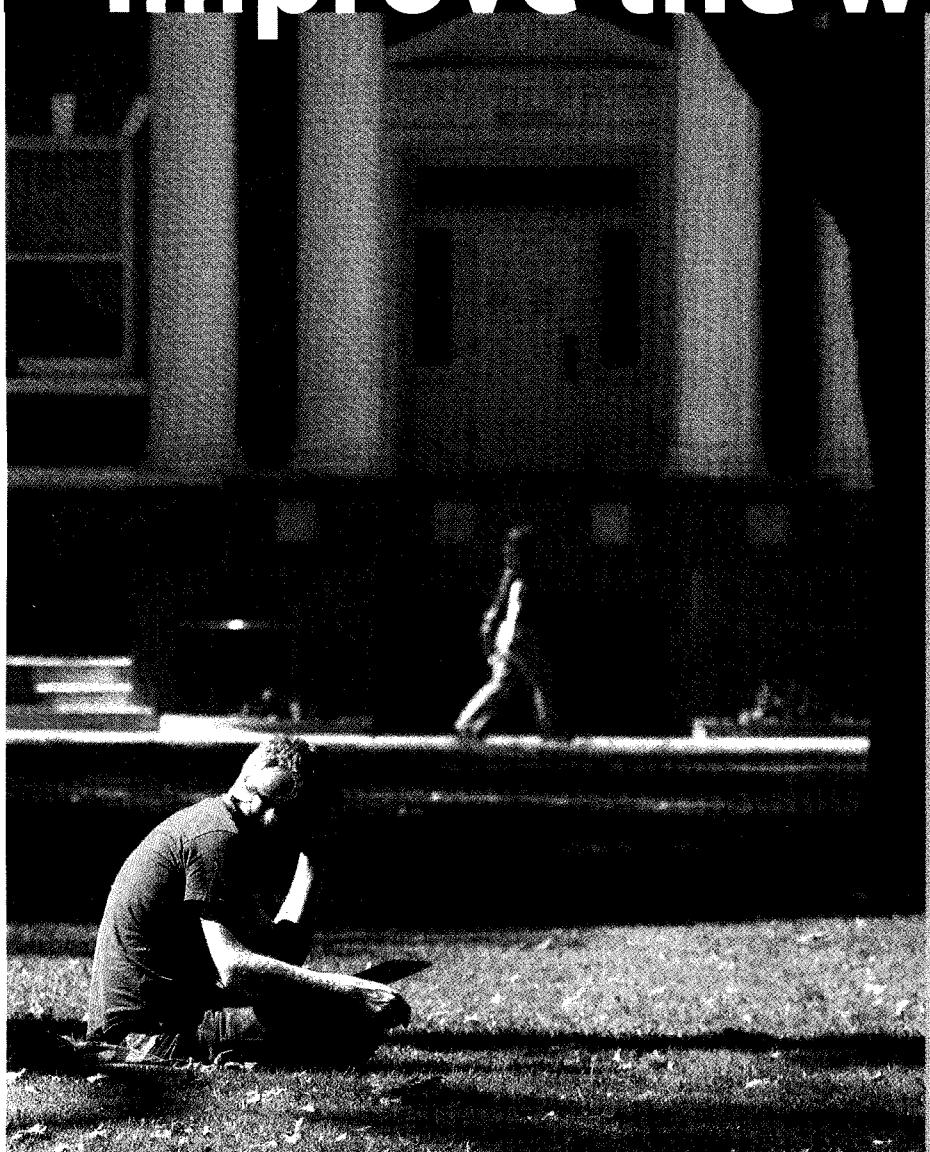

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LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

	OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY: % students receiving Pell Grants	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	SOCIAL MOBILITY: Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	RESEARCH: Research expenditures in thousands (rank)	RESEARCH: Bachelor's to PhD rank	SERVICE: Peace Corps rank	SERVICE: ROTC rank	SERVICE: % of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)	SERVICE: Community service participation and hours served rank	SERVICE: Service staff, courses, and financial aid support rank
209. Goucher College (MD)	31	16	70/64	-6 (192)	217 (90)	93	124	82	10 (168)	104	101
210. Mesa State College (CO)*	31	28	46/32	-14 (234)	0 (95)	226	200	125	21 (45)	15	29
211. Randolph-Macon College (VA)	31	15	63/65	2 (110)	0 (95)	112	74	74	7 (212)	104	101
212. University of Maine—Machias (ME)*	31	43	46/33	-13 (231)	0 (95)	229	201	125	33 (13)	104	101
213. Albertus Magnus College (CT)	31	33	42/56	14 (10)	0 (95)	220	201	125	11 (148)	104	101
214. Sweet Briar College (VA)	30	15	64/72	8 (54)	428 (70)	195	105	125	8 (196)	104	101
215. Eckerd College (FL)	30	19	65/64	-1 (152)	0 (95)	163	159	76	14 (104)	104	101
216. North Greenville University (SC)	30	31	65/49	-16 (235)	0 (95)	229	201	36	19 (59)	104	101
217. University of Virginia—Wise (VA)*	29	36	45/47	2 (124)	0 (95)	174	201	125	12 (125)	104	101
218. Virginia Wesleyan College (VA)	28	31	51/44	-7 (204)	0 (95)	229	201	22	8 (197)	100	92
219. Bridgewater College (VA)	28	24	56/59	3 (96)	0 (95)	204	101	125	8 (205)	104	101
220. American Jewish University (CA)	28	17	66/73	7 (60)	0 (95)	229	201	125	13 (114)	104	101
221. Baker University (KS)	28	22	60/59	-1 (149)	0 (95)	197	194	125	17 (73)	104	101
222. Greensboro College (NC)	27	27	48/41	-7 (199)	0 (95)	225	201	125	17 (69)	94	45
223. Thomas Aquinas College (CA)	27	15	77/70	-7 (202)	0 (95)	95	201	125	0 (245)	104	101
224. Hanover College (IN)	26	19	65/59	-6 (194)	0 (95)	69	163	125	0 (245)	104	101
225. Merrimack College (MA)	26	14	65/72	7 (58)	0 (95)	205	174	125	7 (226)	104	101
226. Roanoke College (VA)	26	16	64/61	-3 (171)	402 (73)	187	128	125	12 (138)	104	101
227. Univ. of Wisconsin—Parkside (WI)*	26	33	48/32	-16 (236)	218 (89)	207	199	124	12 (121)	83	59
228. Coastal Carolina University (SC)*	26	23	56/46	-10 (216)	1095 (40)	223	191	53	20 (52)	104	101
229. Marymount Manhattan Col. (NY)	25	20	60/49	-11 (221)	0 (95)	201	169	78	16 (80)	102	88
230. Ferrum College (VA)	24	46	38/31	-7 (201)	0 (95)	213	201	125	7 (238)	104	101
231. Shimer College (IL)	24	20	77/55	-22 (247)	0 (95)	75	201	125	4 (243)	104	101
232. Franklin Pierce University (NH)	24	23	52/49	-3 (166)	0 (95)	212	175	96	19 (58)	104	101
233. College of St. Thomas More (TX)	24	14	52/75	23 (2)	0 (95)	229	201	125	0 (245)	104	101
234. Thiel College (PA)	24	39	43/35	-8 (207)	0 (95)	194	179	125	7 (214)	104	101
235. Evangel University (MO)	24	32	57/40	-17 (239)	0 (95)	155	201	63	9 (175)	104	101
236. Warren Wilson College (NC)	23	17	68/46	-22 (248)	0 (95)	181	5	125	2 (244)	104	101
237. Bennington College (VT)	23	14	80/61	-19 (242)	0 (95)	130	201	125	12 (134)	104	101
238. Purchase College—SUNY (NY)*	23	22	63/51	-12 (227)	0 (95)	196	158	125	13 (108)	104	101
239. Peace College (NC)	22	40	43/29	-14 (233)	0 (95)	229	201	81	17 (77)	104	101
240. St. John's College (NM)	22	22	79/46	-33 (251)	0 (95)	198	48	125	10 (169)	104	101
241. Colorado State Univ.—Pueblo (CO)*	21	36	46/33	-13 (230)	151 (94)	227	201	47	7 (222)	104	101
242. Atlantic Union College (MA)	21	32	35/36	1 (127)	0 (95)	183	201	125	12 (137)	104	101
243. Fort Lewis College (CO)*	19	24	54/33	-21 (245)	243 (85)	182	130	125	21 (46)	104	101
244. Christopher Newport Univ. (VA)*	19	9	68/49	-19 (241)	709 (57)	200	110	18	5 (242)	104	101
245. Lambuth University (TN)	18	28	56/40	-16 (237)	0 (95)	218	157	85	7 (219)	104	101
246. Brevard College (NC)	18	27	50/31	-19 (243)	0 (95)	229	144	125	9 (180)	63	99
247. Western State Col. of Colorado (CO)*	16	25	54/36	-18 (240)	0 (95)	209	155	125	12 (136)	104	101
248. Brigham Young Univ.—Hawaii (HI)	13	15	63/51	-12 (228)	0 (95)	210	201	68	0 (245)	104	101
249. Metropolitan State Col. of Denver (CO)*	12	24	50/21	-29 (249)	0 (95)	228	192	90	33 (15)	104	101
250. Sierra Nevada College (NV)	12	31	51/21	-30 (250)	0 (95)	229	90	125	11 (140)	104	101
251. Bryn Athyn Col. of New Church (PA)	8	17	66/44	-22 (246)	0 (95)	229	201	125	0 (245)	104	101
252. Thomas More Col. of Lib. Arts (NH)	0	21	69/26	-43 (252)	0 (95)	229	201	125	0 (245)	104	101

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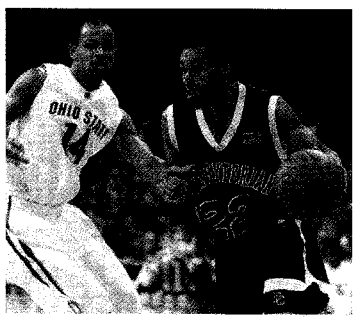

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A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY: 4-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

There are two primary goals to our methodology. First, we considered no single category to be more important than any other. Second, the final rankings needed to reflect excellence across the full breadth of our measures, rather than reward an exceptionally high focus on, say, research. Thus, all three main categories were weighted equally when calculating the final score. In order to ensure that each measurement contributed equally to a school's score within any given category, we standardized each data set so that each had a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. The data were also adjusted to account for statistical outliers. No school's performance in any single area was allowed to exceed five standard deviations from the mean of the data set. Thanks to rounding, some schools have the same overall score. We have ranked them according to their pre-rounding results.

Each of our three categories includes several components. We have determined the community service score by measuring each school's performance in five different areas: the size of each school's Army and Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps programs, relative to the size of the school; the number of alumni currently serving in the Peace Corps, relative to the size of the school; the percentage of federal work-study grant money spent on community service projects; a combined score based on the number of students participating in community service and total service hours performed, both relative to school size; and a combined score based on the number of full-time staff supporting community service, relative to the total number of staff, the number of academic courses that incorporate service, relative to school size, and whether the institution provides scholarships for community service.

The latter two measures are new to this year's rankings. The first is a measure of student participation in community service and the second is a measure of institutional support for service. The new measures are based on data reported to the Corporation for National and Community Service by colleges and universities in their applications for the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. Colleges that did not submit applications had no data and were given zeros on these measures. Many of the schools that dropped in our service rankings this year fall into this category. (Our advice to those schools is that if you care about service, believe you do a good job of promoting it, and want the world to know, then *fill out the application*!)

The research score for national universities is also based on five measurements: the total amount of an institution's research spending (from the Center for Measuring University Performance and the National Science Foundation); the number of science and engineering PhDs awarded by the university; the number of undergraduate alumni who have gone on to receive a PhD in any subject, relative to the size of the school; the number of faculty receiving prestigious awards, relative to the number of full-time faculty; and the number of faculty in the National Academies, relative to the number of full-time faculty. For national universities, we weighted each of these components equally to determine a school's final score in the category. For liberal arts colleges, master's universities, and baccalaureate colleges, which do not have extensive doctoral programs, science and engineering PhDs were excluded and we gave double weight to the number of alumni who go on to get PhDs. Faculty awards and National Academy membership were not included in the research score for these institutions because such data is available for only a relative handful of these schools.

As some readers have pointed out in previous years, our research score rewards large schools for their size. This is intentional. It is the huge numbers of scientists, engineers, and PhDs that larger universities produce, combined with their enormous amounts of research spending, that will help keep America competitive in an increasingly global economy. But the two measures of university research productivity and quality—faculty awards and National Academy members, relative to the number of full-time faculty (from the Center for Measuring University Performance)—are independent of a school's size. This year's guide continues to reward large universities for their research productivity, but these two additional measures also recognize smaller institutions that are doing a good job of producing quality research.

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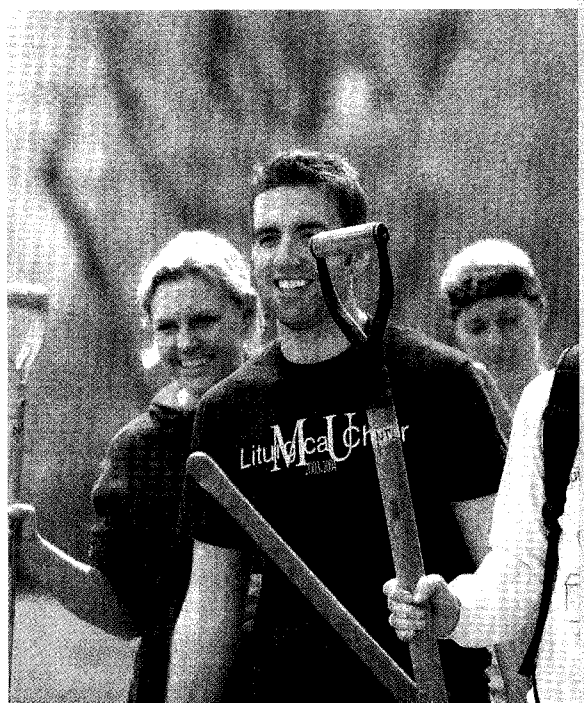
The social mobility score is more complicated. We have data that tell us the percentage of a school's students on Pell Grants, which is a good measure of a school's commitment to educating lower-income kids. (In prior years we've had to rely on several data sources for this information. This year, we have a more authoritative source. The U.S. Department of Education now requires colleges to report the number of Pell Grant recipients as part of the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System survey, providing reliable and comparable data across all institutions. The methodology the Department of Education uses to calculate Pell Grant percentages is slightly different from the methodology we used in prior years, resulting in some changes to colleges' Pell Grant percentages and thus to our social mobility rankings.) We'd like to know how many of these Pell Grant recipients graduate, but schools aren't required to track those figures. Still, because lower-income students at any school are less likely to graduate than wealthier ones, the percentage of Pell Grant recipients is a meaningful indicator in and of itself. If a campus has a large percentage of Pell Grant students—that is to say, if its student body is disproportionately poor—it will tend to diminish the school's overall graduation rate.

We have a formula that predicts the graduation rate of the average school given its percentage of Pell Grant students and its average SAT score. (Since most schools only provide the twenty-fifth percentile and the seventy-fifth percentile of scores, we took the mean of the two. For schools where a majority of students took the ACT, we converted ACT scores into SAT equivalents.) Schools with graduation rates that are higher than the "average" school with similar stats score better than schools that match or, worse, undershoot the mark. Four schools had comparatively low Pell Grant rates and comparatively high SAT scores, and had predicted graduation rates of over 100 percent. We adjusted these graduation rates to 100 percent. In addition, we used a second metric that predicted the percentage of students on Pell Grants based on SAT scores. This indicated which selective universities (since selectivity is highly correlated with SAT scores) are making the effort to enroll low-income students. Two schools with extremely high SAT scores had predicted Pell percentages below zero. We adjusted these percentages to zero. The two formulas were weighted equally. —*Eds.*



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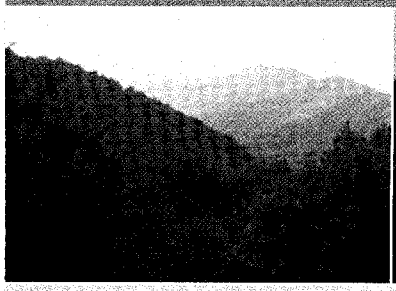

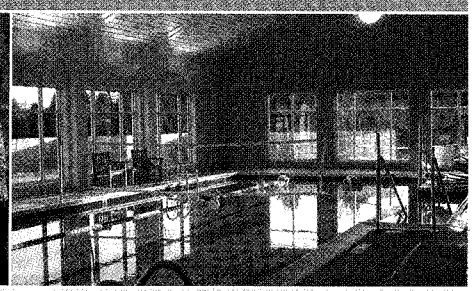

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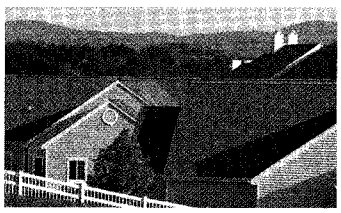

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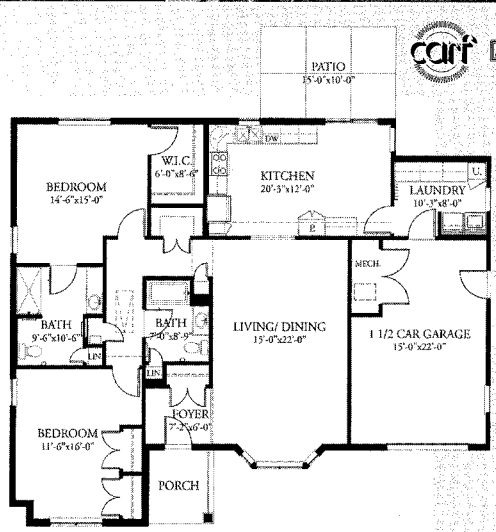

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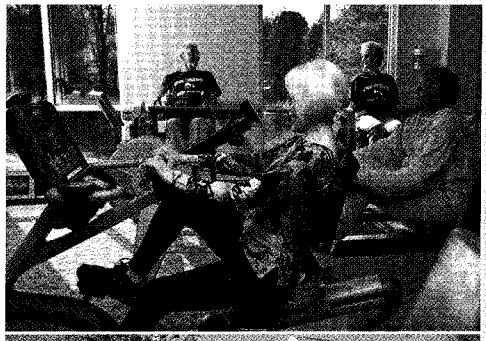

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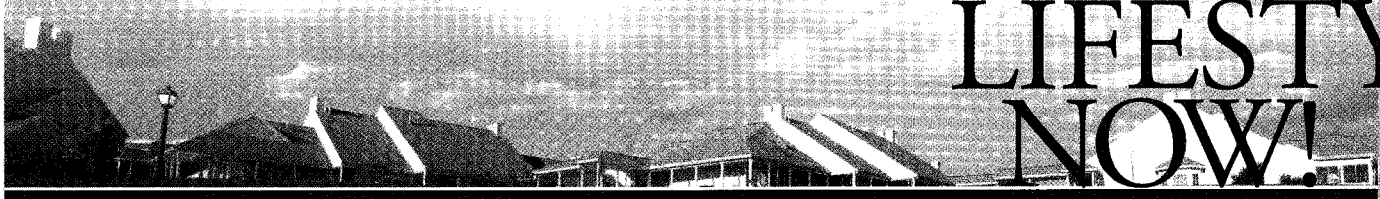

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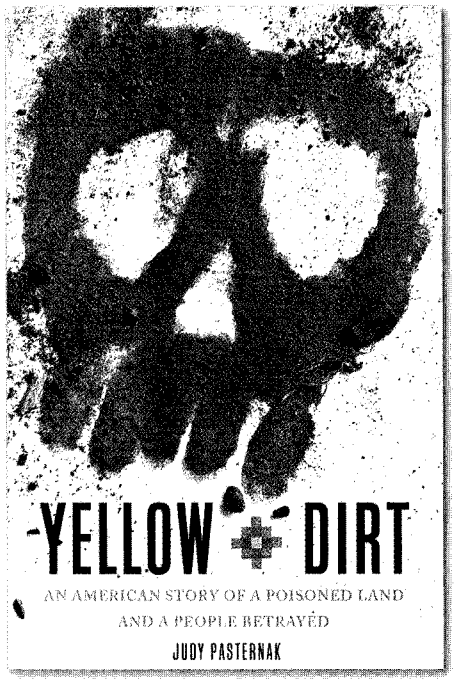
Elemental Neglect

Uranium mining killed and sickened thousands of Navajo Indians. They've barely gotten an apology.

By Zachary Roth



Yellow Dirt: An American Story of a Poisoned Land and a People Betrayed
by Judy Pasternak
Free Press, 336 pp.

Things began to go wrong for Lois Neztsosie and her husband David in the early 1970s. The couple had herded sheep on the western Navajo range for many years, when inexplicably, the birthrate of their flock had started to drop. Of the few new lambs that came along, some were born without eyes, and many had difficulty walking. Meanwhile, the Neztsosies also were worried about their two youngest daughters, born in 1970 and 1971, respectively. One had a weak right eye, and often stumbled. The other had developed ulcers in her corneas, and soon began to walk on the sides of her feet. Doctors at the Indian Health Service believed the girls must have suffered from a rare genetic disorder.

It didn't occur to anyone at the time that the defects in the sheep and the girls could have the same cause. For several years, Lois had taken the sheep to drink at large lakes that had recently appeared in the area—unaware that they had formed from abandoned uranium mines. She often drank from the lakes herself, including while she was pregnant. In the 1990s, scientists would calculate that for every three liters of water Lois drank from the lakes, she exposed herself to nearly 100 times the level of uranium that the government considered safe.

The apparent poisoning of the Neztsosie children, as well as countless of their fellow Navajos, could be said to have begun in October 1941, writes former *Los Angeles Times* reporter Judy Pasternak in *Yellow Dirt: An American Story of a Poisoned Land and a People Betrayed*, her chilling account of uranium mining on Navajo land. That was when FDR's interior secretary, Harold Ickes, sat down with officials from the Vanadium Corporation of America (VCA) to discuss potential mining on the Navajo reservation, a 27,000-square-mile area that extends into Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, in the "four corners" region of the Southwest.

In the late 1930s, scientists had confirmed that an isotope of uranium could be used to split the atom, and thereby create an atomic weapon. With the U.S. preparing to join the fight against Germany and Japan, the acquisition of uranium had become an urgent national priority—and the Navajo reservation contained some of the few domestic deposits of the metal. And so, the federal government and private mining firms like VCA used the promise of mining jobs and royalty payments (many of which never panned out), as well as appeals to the Navajos' wartime sense of patriotism, to convince the tribe to open their land to uranium exploration—thus turning the reservation into a key cog in the wheel of the Manhattan Project, headquartered about 200 miles away at Los Alamos. Soon, the struggle against the Axis powers was supplanted by the nuclear race with the Soviets, for which the Navajo mines continued to pump out uranium through much of the 1950s.

From the start, Navajos worked in the mines without protective equipment as basic as leather gloves and coveralls. And as early as 1948, a health and safety official with the Atomic Energy Commission named Ralph Batie had raised the alarm about mineworkers' exposure to radiation. But higher-ups at the commission—apparently wary of opening a can of worms they might have trouble closing again—made an affirmative decision to ignore Batie, leaving the problem to state-level regulators who had no experience in radiation issues. Several oth-

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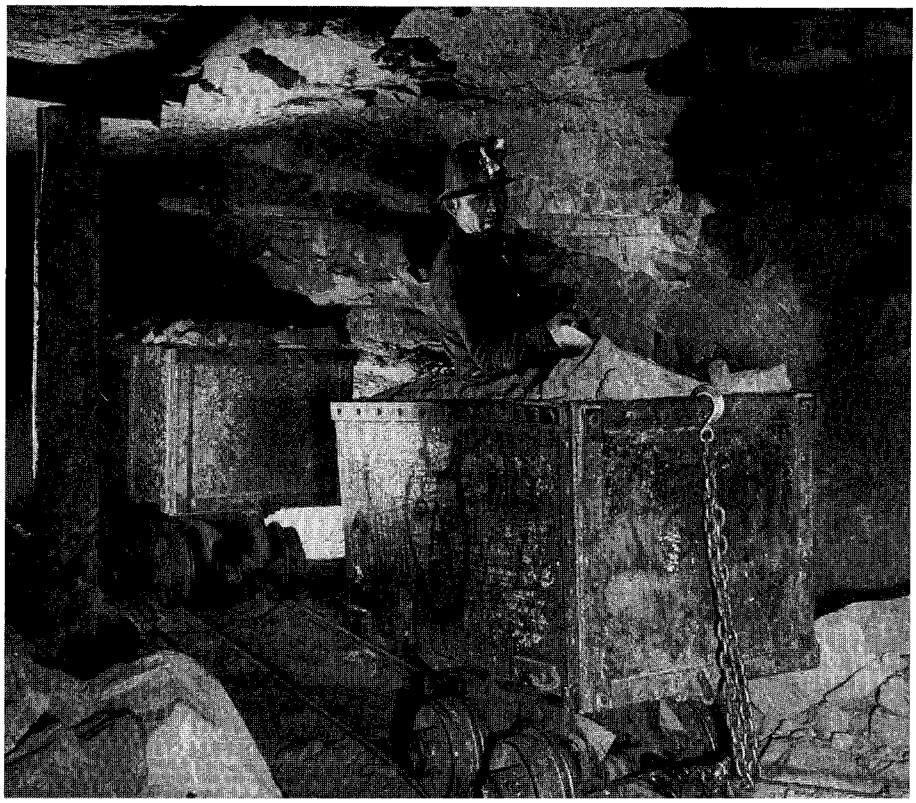

Shafted: A Navajo man mines uranium ore for the U.S. government in 1951.

Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

er efforts to protect the miners from the effects of radiation met similar fates.

Years later, after hundreds of miners had died of lung cancer, a medical expert consulting on a lawsuit brought by the Navajos against the federal government would conclude that the miners had averaged cumulative exposures forty-four times higher than the levels at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. One study from the 1980s found that cancer rates among Navajo uranium miners were fifty-six times higher than those of the general population.

But it wasn't the miners alone who were put at massive risk. When the pace of weapons production slowed and the mines closed down in the 1960s, the federal government allowed VCA and other companies to leave the reservation without conducting serious cleanup or decontamination efforts. In the ensuing years, Navajos grazed their livestock—which they then ate—on uranium-contaminated ground; drank, like Lois Neztsosie, from uranium-riddled watering holes; let their kids play on massive uranium waste piles; and even in some cases constructed new houses using uranium tailings as a cheap cement. No one told them not to.

From the early 1970s to the late 1990s, the cancer death rate among the tribe doubled, while the U.S. rate as a whole declined slightly. One study released in 1981 by a medical researcher found that rates of reproductive, breast, and bone cancers among Navajo teens were seventeen times higher than expected. A rash of Navajo babies was born with fingers that fused together as they grew, or, like the Neztsosie children, with other developmental defects.

It wasn't that no one knew the waste was dangerous by this point. In 1966, it was discovered that residents of Grand Junction, Colorado, a white town 200 miles north of the reservation, had used uranium tailings from a nearby mill in the construction of homes, churches, and schools. The local congressman, Democrat Wayne Aspinall, had clout—he chaired the Interior Committee and sat on the joint House-Senate Atomic Energy Committee—and he pressed the issue. The chair of the AEC noted in his diary that the U.S. had a "moral obligation" to act, and the federal government quickly spent $250 million to remove Grand Junction's contaminated material.

Meanwhile, that same government appeared not to feel a similar moral obligation to the Navajos, offering the tribe only bureaucratic buck passing and foot dragging. When, in 1982, Congress tried to get the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct an official government study of the Navajos' exposure, HHS resisted, insisting that "the adverse health effects of radiation exposure have been extensively studied." Congress didn't push the issue.

As the years passed and the evidence of what had happened to the Navajos became increasingly hard to deny, Washington haltingly began to try to make things right. In 1990, Senators Pete Domenici and Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, and Orrin Hatch of Utah, got a bill passed that won modest payments for the families of the miners and an official government apology for the "hardships" endured—which Pasternak calls "one of the least gracious expressions of regret in history." But it wasn't until November 2006, when Pasternak herself, then a reporter in the Washington bureau of the *Los Angeles Times*, published a prize-winning four-part series on the scandal (from which this book grew) that Congress began to focus on the full scope of the problem, including those Navajos who were exposed to radiation long after the mines had shut down. Finally, in 2007—after Democratic Rep. Henry Waxman harangued senior government officials at a hearing on the issue that he'd convened after reading Pasternak's reporting—a comprehensive five-year cleanup plan was drawn up, in which the EPA pledged among other things to pay to replace contaminated homes and to truck in bottled water to areas on the reservation that needed it.

Pasternak tells much of this infuriating tale from the perspective of the individual people involved—mostly the Navajos themselves. That may help further elicit the reader's sympathy, but it also leads to some cringe-inducing passages. "Adakai, as a traditional Navajo, thought it only right that the would-be pillagers were frustrated by the fates," Pasternak writes. "How could they be rewarded for piercing deep into Mother Earth ... ?" When Adakai's son—who, decades ear-

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lier, had ignored his wise father's advice by tipping off white prospectors to the presence of carnotite (uranium ore) on the reservation, in the hope of profiting—dies of lung cancer, Pasternak renders the event thus: "Then the founder slipped away, a victim of his own betrayal. The mesa had exacted its revenge."

It's not just that this is flabby prose, tinged with the kind of well-meaning magical thinking, and clichés about wisdom, fate, and Mother Earth, that too often characterize writing about Native Americans. It's also that this leads to an odd lack of analytical rigor and context. Pasternak devotes much of a chapter to the making of a Navajo high school documentary about the saga called *Hear Our Voices*, but gives short shrift to—or ignores completely—several crucial big-picture questions that the reader finds himself asking. Among them: Could significant numbers of miners have been protected through the use of basic safety equipment, or was uranium mining in the middle of the twentieth century an inherently deadly activity? How much money did the jobs and royalty payments from uranium mining ultimately bring onto the reservation? How many total Navajos—estimating, if necessary, from the best information available—are thought to have died as a result of uranium exposure, and how many children are thought to have been born with defects?

Still, this feels like quibbling, if only because the basic facts of the narrative that Pasternak has done so much to uncover and weave together form such a compelling indictment of governmental neglect. Pasternak implicitly contrasts the speed and effectiveness with which the U.S. can mobilize its resources to address an issue deemed to be a national priority, with the bureaucratic inertia and delay that too often characterize government efforts on behalf of our society's least powerful members.

That's a classic function of a certain kind of investigative journalism. As newspaper and magazine budgets for ambitious, deeply researched, morally alert reporting like Pasternak's continue to dwindle, we should celebrate the examples we have. WM

Zachary Roth is a *Washington Monthly* contributing editor and a writer living in New York.

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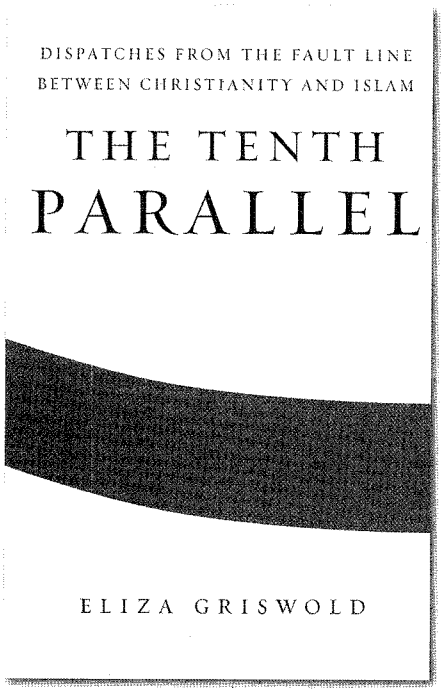
God's Geography



The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault Line Between Christianity and Islam

by Eliza Griswold
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 336 pp.

Dispatches from the sweltering, malarial no-man's land between Islam and Christianity

By Joshua Hammer

In an era of shrunken foreign news budgets and dial-it-in journalism, Eliza Griswold has made a career out of going against the flow. Just after the 9/11 terrorist attacks she left a comfortable job as a *Vanity Fair* editorial assistant and planted herself in Baghdad, then established herself as a freelance correspondent reporting from some of the world's edgiest places. She has written lengthy magazine pieces about cannibalism in the Congo, Somali piracy, and civil war in Sudan, all while pursuing a second career as a poet. Griswold's background is also intriguing: her father is the former presiding archbishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States. Her new book, *The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault Line Between Christianity and Islam*, seems the logical outgrowth of both her unusual pedigree and her intrepid, footloose journalism: it traces a journey, over six years, along the latitudinal line that runs approximately 300 miles south of the equator—the zone where Christianity and Islam collide.

Griswold has crafted a vivid book that is part history, part travelogue, and part inquiry into faith as a cohesive, as well as fragmenting, force in Third World societies. The main focus of Griswold's reporting is Africa, where an "explosion of Christianity" over the last fifty years, she writes, has raised the stakes for the many adherents of both faiths who equate numerical superiority with survival. There are now 417 million Christians living south of the tenth parallel—one-fifth of the world's total Christian population—and roughly the same number of Muslims living north of it. The two faiths meet in the so-called Middle Belt, a 200-mile-wide strip of grassland that runs across most of the continent, and that includes the *suud*—the notorious tsetse fly–infested swamp that stopped Islam in its tracks during the colonial era. "In this fragile zone," Griswold writes, "the pressures wrought by growing numbers of people ... are sharpening tensions." Adherents of the two faiths are fighting, she writes, not only about religion, but "over land, food, oil, and water."

Nowhere is that conflict more acute than in the Sudan, Griswold finds, where a decades-long civil war between the Christian north and the Muslim south was finally quelled, thanks in part to American diplomacy—one of the few policy successes of the George W. Bush administration. In advance of the 2011 referendum on Southern Sudan's independence, Griswold visited the area around Abeyei, an oil-rich town that straddles the border of two Sudans, where bloody clashes presage an imminent renewal of the conflict. She describes a memorable encounter with Franklin Graham, the charismatic, pistol-packing preacher and founder of the aid group Samaritan's Purse (and son of the televangelist Billy Graham), whose determination to win Christian converts in the Muslim heartland has stirred up suspicions and animosities. Joining him on a missionary trip to Khartoum in 2003, Griswold describes a bizarre meeting between Graham and Sudan's president, Omar Bashir—a hardline Islamist who would later be indicted

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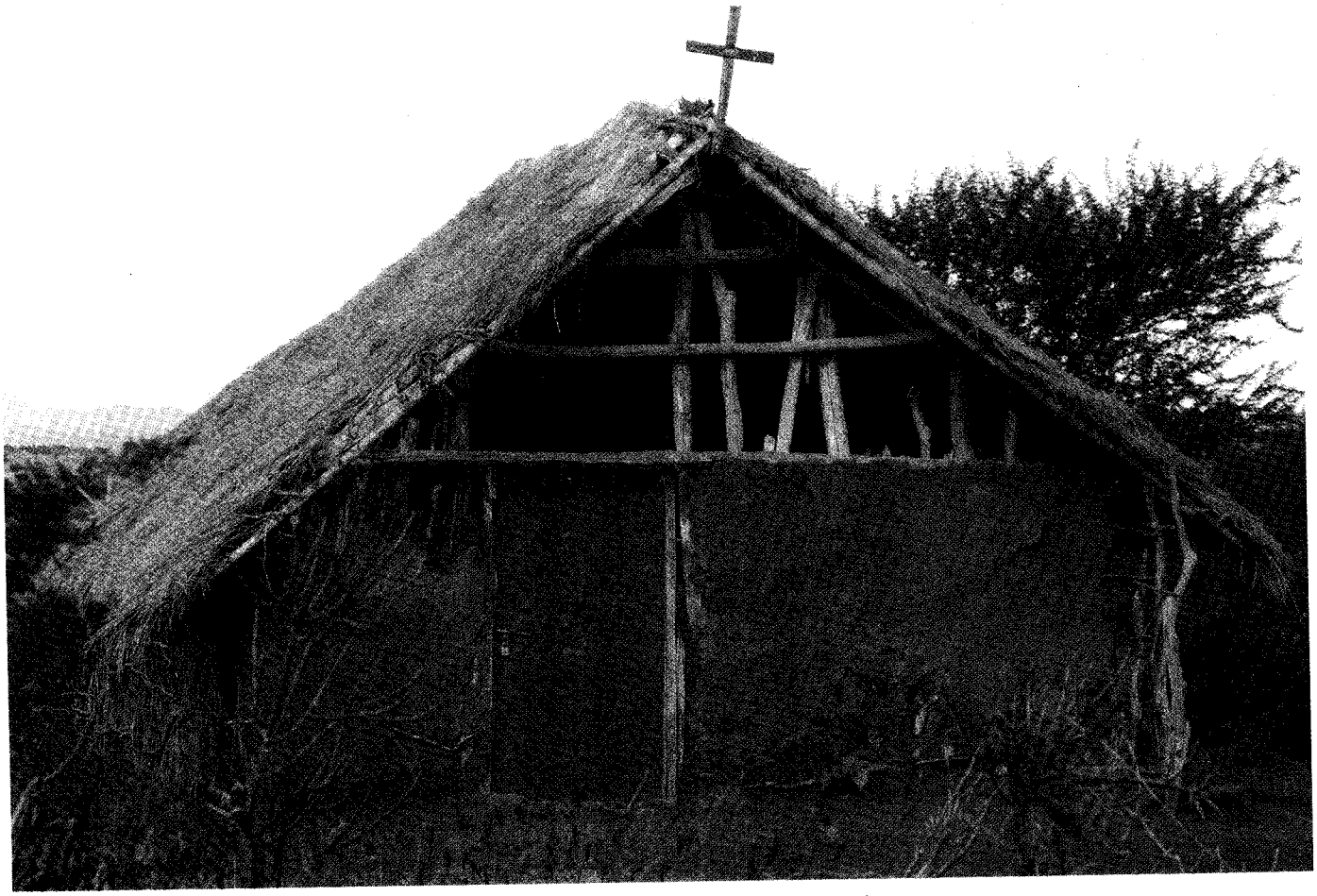

Crossroads: A church in Tanzania, where the Christian and Muslim populations are roughly equal in size.

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for war crimes in Darfur—who jokes with the evangelist about sending Sudanese warplanes to bomb his hospital in the Christian south.

The battle for souls—and resources—is also at the heart of the struggle in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation. Griswold visits Canaanland, the 565-acre headquarters of the Living Faith Church, one of the most aggressive proselytizers in Nigeria's Pentecostal movement. She then finds its Islamic counterpart, Nasrul-Lahi-il-Fatih ("There is no help except from Allah"), whose ventures include a soft-drink company, a prison outreach program, even a matchmaking service. "Success, triumph, and glory are from the Creator," says a member of the Islamic group's youth division, sounding remarkably like some of his industrious Christian counterparts. Nigeria's Islamic and Christian entrepreneurs may find common ground, but the country also has the continent's most religion-fueled clashes, which routinely leave hundreds dead. Ironically, it was the collapse of one of the world's most brutal military dictatorships, in 1999, Griswold writes, that unleashed the worst of the bloodletting: democratic elections in this zone of destitution and shrinking resources has become a zero-sum game in which neither side can countenance a victory by the other.

Crossing the Indian Ocean to Asia, Griswold finds that the same themes are playing out in remote archipelagos and island "paradises." She tracks down adulterers awaiting flogging in a jail in Banda Aceh, Sumatra—where Islamic fundamentalists have taken advantage of the chaos that followed the 2004 tsunami to push through Indonesia's only sharia laws. She chronicles the tragic ordeal of an American husband-and-wife missionary team kidnapped by Islamic radicals from an island resort in the Philippines. (It is hard to say whether the couple were targeted specifically because of their beliefs or because they were handy Westerners; but in the aftermath of the husband's death, he was embraced as a martyr to the Christian cause.) She visits the remote Indonesian island of Sulawesi, in the company of a supposedly reformed radical Islamist heading back to his home village. Here, she finds an area riven by horrific clashes between Christian and Islamic gangs, each group determined to drive the other off the island. In the Christian highlands of Sulawesi she meets Noviana Malewa, the only survivor of an attack on Christian schoolgirls by Taliban-style militants in which three close friends were beheaded. "A deep, shiny scar cut across her right cheek," Griswold writes. "She was wearing a pink rubber bracelet that read 'HE IS RISEN!' A policeman carrying an AK-47 trailed behind her sending text messages."

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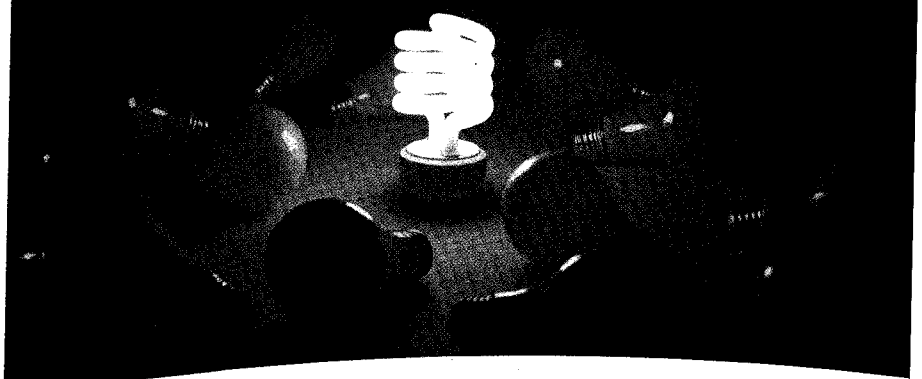

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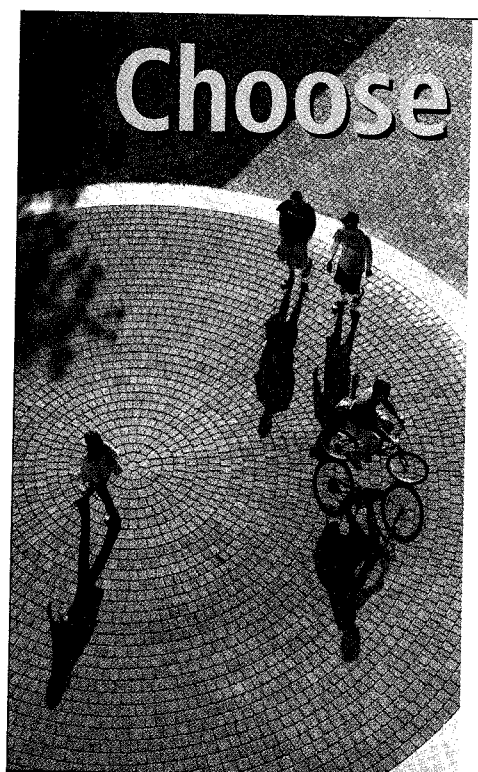

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Though the author traces much of the tensions along the tenth parallel to the explosion of radical Islam in recent years, she makes it clear that neither side has the monopoly on cruelty: the Christian gangs she encounters in Sulawesi, the Philippines, and Nigeria turn out to be as nasty and vengeful as their Islamic counterparts.

The amount of shoe leather that Griswold expended on this project is extraordinary, and reason enough to read her book. Still, she veers away from her main focus at times: a lengthy section on Somalia, for example, touches on Christian Ethiopia's 2006 invasion of the anarchic country, then being run by Islamic fundamentalists, but otherwise it's just a nicely done piece of hellhole reportage. The book can lack narrative drive, coming off more like a series of well-crafted magazine pieces. And while it is crammed with rich characters, scenes, and anecdotes, there's something unsurprising about this intractable conflict. Griswold has traveled thousands of miles to document what is, ultimately, predictable: Islamic radicalism, Christian evangelism, and the competition for shrinking resources have ratcheted up a conflict that's been going on for centuries.

Griswold ends her book on a note of optimism. After meeting an imam and a minister in a small town in Nigeria's Middle Belt who are working side by side to foster religious harmony in their violence-wracked region, she is inspired by the possibility of reconciliation. "Religious strife where Christians and Muslims meet is real, and grim," she writes. "But the long history of everyday encounters, of believers of different faiths shouldering all things together, even as they follow different faiths, is no less real." Sadly, however, most of the everyday encounters that Griswold documents in her marathon journey give little hope that the reconciliators will prevail. WM

Joshua Hammer is the author of three books, and a freelance foreign correspondent based in Berlin.

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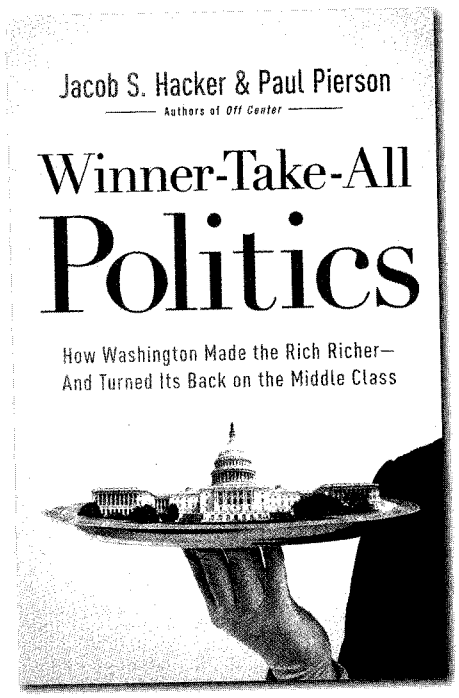
Unnatural Selection

How a politically rigged economic system has been sold to Americans as a force of nature.

By Ed Kilgore



Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer—And Turned Its Back on the Middle Class

by Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson
Simon & Schuster, 368 pp.

In their very influential 2006 book, *Off Center*, political scientists Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson conducted a persuasive analysis of the dynamics by which conservative theorists and practitioners pulled the Republican Party and then the terms of national debate to the right. Now the duo is back, with a complex analysis of how the U.S. economic system has also moved "off center" toward an extreme concentration of wealth, and how progressive efforts to reverse that trend have run aground against a variety of institutional and political obstacles.

Framed as a "detective story" about how the economy has arrived at the current juncture, *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer—And Turned Its Back on the Middle Class* begins by elucidating trends in the distribution of total income over the last thirty years, in absolute terms and as compared to other wealthy countries, and focusing on the truly rich: the top 1 percent of Americans. This section also forcefully argues that income distribution is not some sort of "natural" phenomenon that government sometimes counteracts (at the cost, we are usually told, of inefficiency), but the product of government policies themselves:

> *There are no pre-political markets. Markets are inevitably shaped and channeled by political forces, dependent on the rules that are set up and enforced by those who control the coercive power of the state. The laissez-faire vision of the economy held up in the Supreme Court's 1905 decision in* Lochner v. New York *[a case that gave its name to an era in which the Supreme Court abrogated a slew of Progressive Era workplace reforms] was a political choice, one with distinct, sometimes brutal consequences, and one that required a great deal of government intervention to emerge and survive.*

Hacker and Pierson apply the same principle to the belief, common among Democrats and Republicans alike, that contemporary income inequality is the result of a globalized economy in which education and skills levels are the great dividers. While acknowledging that these assets matter, they stress that the vast majority of Americans who have been losing ground to the super-rich for decades include many well-educated people, and in many respects it is government policies that both promote inequality and fail to counteract it.

The authors explore those policies and the political dynamics in the second part of the book, beginning with the Carter administration and three big fights in Congress (at a time when Democrats controlled both houses of Congress and the White House). What they found was a new level of organization and militancy by the business community in synch with a Republican Party that was rapidly growing more conservative. Two big Democratic initiatives, labor law reform and a new consumer advocacy agency, were defeated; a third, tax reform, turned into a reduction in business and investment taxes.

These unexpected conservative policy victories turned out to be dress rehearsals for the big tax and budget battles in Congress that followed the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. The growing power nexus of conservative and business interests kicked into high gear, and the fight against the Clinton health care initiative was another great leap forward for the organized right, with the big payoff ultimately being the deregulation of the financial industry in the late 1990s, and then the Bush tax cuts of 2001 and 2003.

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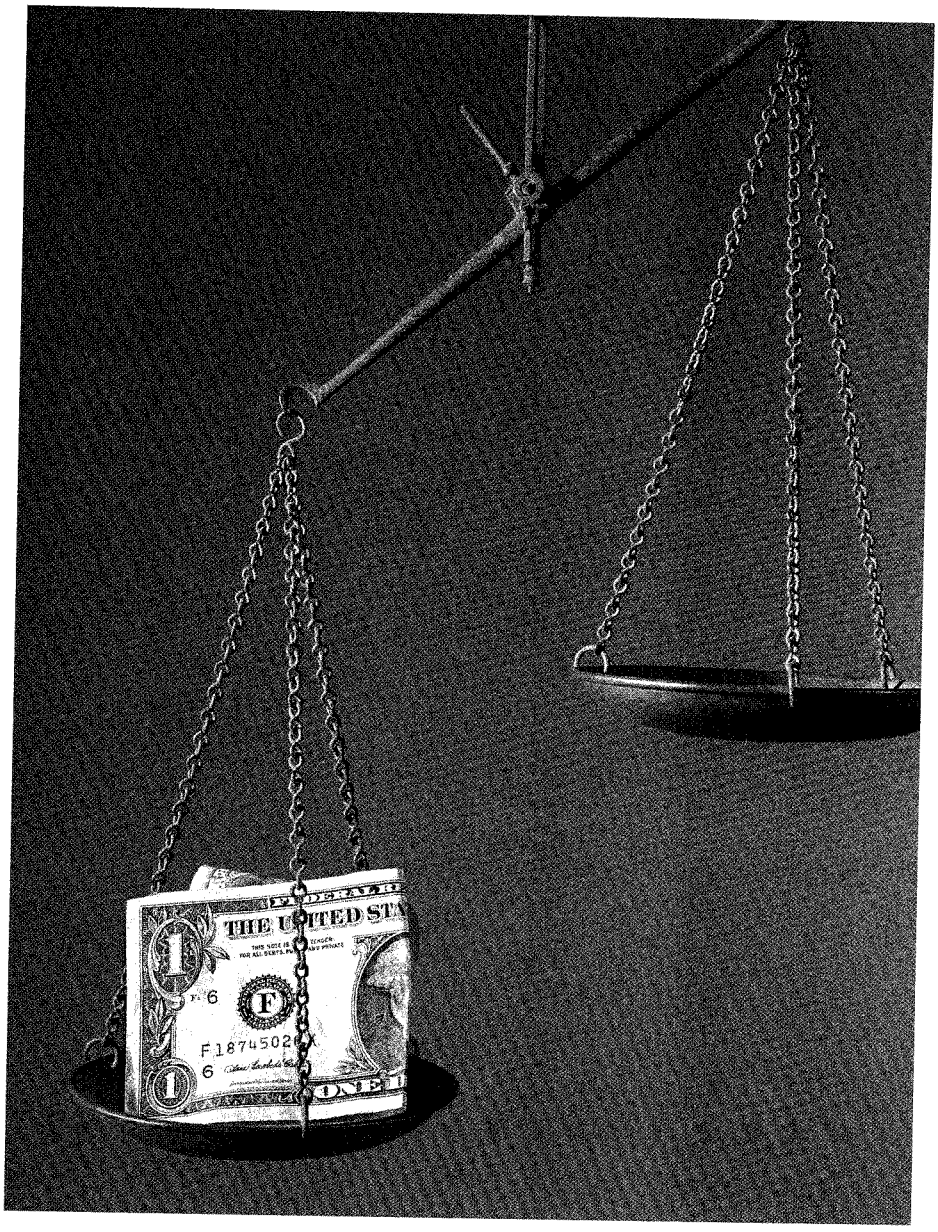

Steven Puetzer

It's in the last third of their book that Hacker and Pierson begin to assess the complicity of Democrats in what they call a "thirty-year war" over the direction of the U.S. economy. While they do score the Donkey Party for some important sins other than fecklessness—most notably support for financial deregulation—their account does not devolve into the standard "populist" account of "betrayal" by the corporate whores of the DLC or the Clinton and Obama administrations. Indeed, they express considerable sympathy that Democrats are outgunned financially and institutionally in Congress. Interestingly, they choose not some DLC type or Blue Dog for the poster child of Democratic complicity in financial deregulation and the subsequent meltdown, but Chuck Schumer, who is an impeccably partisan progressive Democrat on most issues but thinks of Wall Street as a New York constituency group. On this as on many subjects, the authors stress the contrast between the GOP's ever-increasing ideological unity and the Democrats' difficulty in reining in election-fearing red-and-purple-state members of Congress along with "Republicans for a Day" (not only the New Yorkers fighting for Wall Street, but the Californians defending tech-industry stock options), who have parochial reasons for voting to defend privilege.

Hacker and Pierson also note how the relatively modest "renewal" efforts of Obama and congressional Democrats have spurred a fierce reaction that has moved the GOP even further to the right and created powerful momentum for economic policies redolent of the pre–New Deal era.

> *Reagan's party was more conservative than Nixon's; Gingrich's, more conservative than Reagan's; George W. Bush's, more conservative than Gingrich's. The transformation of the GOP, along with its manifest failures as a governing party, finally caught up with it in the 2006 and 2008 elections. Yet, strikingly, this has only made the party more conservative. Neither electoral rebuke nor the economic catastrophe fueled by financial deregulation nor the Democrats' passage of health-care reform has done anything to shake the party's commitment to the restoration of the Gilded Age.*
>
> *On the one hand, GOP leaders appealed openly to bankers for financial support by touting their opposition to financial reform. On the other hand, conservative organizations and leading GOP strategists crafted "populist" commercials and sound bites for voters that described the Democrats' reform legislation as just another bailout that put taxpayers on the hook for corporate irresponsibility. It's the political equivalent of having one's cake and eating it too.*

The authors' prescription for restoring "balance" to the political system and thus to the U.S. economy is reasonable sounding, but hard to envision occurring in the immediate future:

> *Reversing the stark trend toward economic hyperconcentration at the top will take more than concerted and sustained government action to improve the economic and political standing of the middle class. Political reform geared at diminishing the advantages of the privileged will also be essential. The aims should be threefold: to reduce the capacity of entrenched elites to block needed reform; to facilitate broader participation by those whose*

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voices are drowned out; and to encourage the development of groups that can provide a continuing, organized capacity to mobilize middle-class voters and monitor government and politics on their behalf.

That means, above all, breaking the power of the Senate filibuster; restoring the labor movement's economic and political power; and creating mass political movements equivalent to the Obama campaign's organization that can be deployed between elections. These are all laudable, important goals—but with the possible exception of filibuster reform, they probably can't be achieved in time to help Democrats in 2010 or 2012.

If I had one criticism of this very valuable book, it would be that the authors never quite come to grips with the persistent voter ambivalence about public-sector activism that invariably undermines progressive politics and governance. The Republican resurgence that thwarted the Carter administration and fed the Reagan Revolution was not just the result of more effective mobilization of business interests; it was also facilitated by an acute sense of national decline as stagflation struck the economy and the Iranian revolutionary regime thumbed its nose at Uncle Sam. The Gingrich revolution rose because government seemed helpless to rescue the economy or control the federal budget, and crashed because voters decided that they really did value government to perform services the GOP wanted to abandon.

The Bush tax cuts, an action so momentous that the authors say "[a] senator's vote on this bill says more about his or her commitment to the middle class than one hundred votes on the minimum wage," were enacted for reasons other than corporate lobbying. Faced with the unlikely prospect of budget surpluses, Democrats led with their trump card, arguing that they should be used to protect Social Security. Bush's counter was, "The American people have been overcharged, and on their behalf, I am here to ask for a refund." This worked because many middle-class Americans in swing states with vulnerable Democratic senators didn't trust government to do anything positive with their money. TARP and the economic stimulus package, whatever their macroeconomic merits, have produced a similar reaction.

The "thirty-year war" over economic policy has been conducted against a background of post–New Deal declining faith in government to get things right, and all the laudable steps Hacker and Pierson prescribe will only work if that faith is restored. It's terrible but true that many middle-class Americans would rather let the rich get richer than trust government with a nickel more in tax revenues than they deem essential. Ending "winner-take-all politics" will require an end to "everyone loses" perceptions of activist government. WM

Ed Kilgore is managing editor of the *Democratic Strategist* and a senior fellow at the Progressive Policy Institute. He is also a special correspondent for the *New Republic*.

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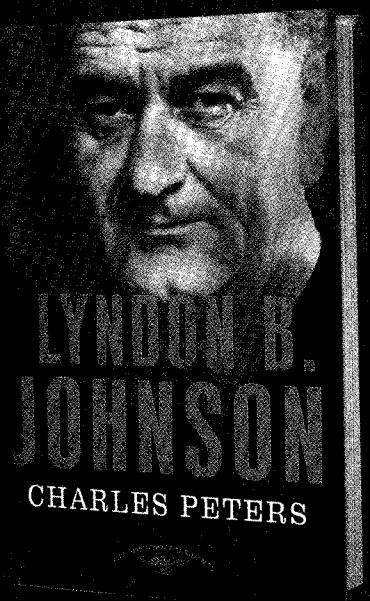

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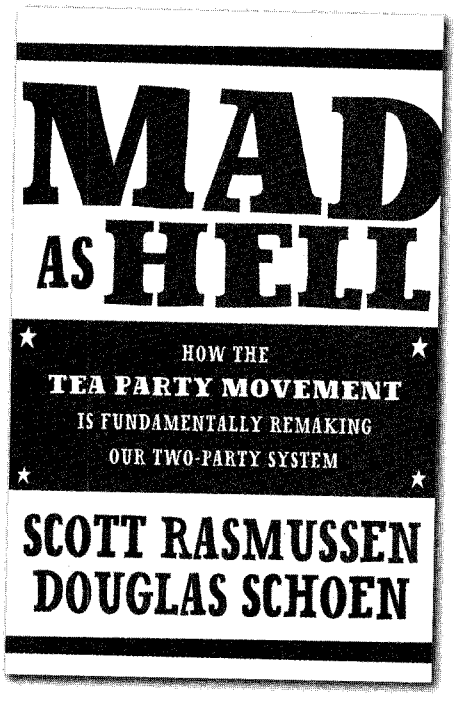

Mad as Hell: How the Tea Party Movement Is Fundamentally Remaking Our Two-Party System

by Scott Rasmussen and Doug Schoen
Harper, 336 pp.

How to become a cable TV expert on the Tea Party when there's really nothing new to say.

By Joshua Green

You don't have to be Nostradamus to predict that the Tea Party is going to get an awful lot of attention in the run-up to the midterm elections. Or that the locus of attention is going to be cable television. This presents an opportunity. Someone is going to have to appear night after night to expound, in grave and urgent tones, upon what the Tea Party movement "means." Someone will have to assume the role of expert. Scott Rasmussen and Doug Schoen, veteran pollsters who don't shy away from the camera, would like to be that someone. Their new book, *Mad as Hell: How the Tea Party Movement Is Fundamentally Remaking Our Two-Party System*, styles itself as scholarly analysis buttressed with "proprietary" polling data and other bells and whistles. But it's really a job application for Chief Tea Party Talking Heads.

To land the job, you must come equipped to justify, and if possible amplify, the latest media fixation. The authors' first order of business, then, is to establish that the Tea Party movement is very, very important and to play up to its members' vision of themselves as political actors of historic consequence. Rasmussen and Schoen do this mainly through repeated assertion and a clamor of superlatives. The Tea Party, they claim, is "the most energetic and powerful force of its time," "one of the most powerful and extraordinary movements in recent political history," "the most potent force in American politics, with the potential to fundamentally change America," "America's most vibrant political force," and one that "may even be powerful enough to elect the next president of the United States." And all of this in the first few pages! It's enough to induce a powerful headache.

The Tea Party is certainly significant, though sweeping claims about its transformative power are premature. To date, the disgruntled Republicans, frustrated independents, and pox-on-both-houses malcontents who make up its membership have served mainly to help the Democrats by defeating mainstream candidates in GOP primaries in upstate New York, Kentucky, and Nevada. This could change in a hurry, and there is some grounds for thinking that it may. In Texas, the mainstream Republican governor, Rick Perry, refashioned himself as a true believer and easily fended off a primary challenge from Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchinson, once considered the favorite. If other Republicans can manage to harness this activist energy, then the Tea Party really could become a force to reckon with. A book that carefully examined the movement's origins and made clear what its members plan to do if indeed they seize control of the government would have been truly valuable.

Had Rasmussen and Schoen written such a book, their hyperbole could be overlooked. But they didn't. Instead, they are mostly content to pass along the conventional wisdom that anyone who watches cable news or reads a newspaper can probably recite from memory: that a combination of economic dislocation, frustration with Washington, declining living standards, and loss of faith in the American dream have produced an angry, fearful electorate. Rasmussen and Schoen do this mainly from a point of view hostile to liberals. On the issue of legislative gridlock,

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for instance, "Democrats have been stymied at every turn by the rampant partisanship that President Obama has failed to stem." Well, that's one way of looking at it.

The most useful part of *Mad as Hell* is its attempt to place the Tea Party in historical context. "The right-wing populism we are experiencing today," they write,

> *is significant because it represents the conjoining of three separate, distinct, and not easily reconcilable strands of conservatism: economic conservatism, small-government conservatism, and social conservatism. Historically, these strands have not worked in concert. And occasionally they have even been at odds. But in 2009, they seemed to converge under the broad umbrella of the Tea Party movement.*

The authors attribute this convergence to two major shifts in American society. The first is an economic displacement that has kept median wages stagnant since 1980, while enormous wealth has accrued to those at the top of the income ladder. The second is a sudden political shift under Obama that has caused independents to pull to the right.

This political diagnosis mostly rings true. Where the book suffers is in its insistence on imbuing these trends with world-historic significance well before they've had a chance to play out. Given the Tea Party's dubious record to date, it's a little silly to claim, as Rasmussen and Schoen do, that "a once-in-a-century realignment has occurred, yet no one today seems to know it."

This exaggeration seems less a matter of the authors' not understanding what's going on, and more a desire to hype the Tea Party movement so as to increase their own prospects as experts who can talk about it with Glenn Beck. That may be why their writing tends to be cast in the form of declarative, television-friendly sound bites. In fact, the book's entire format uncannily resembles that of *Hardball* and other political shout shows. It's padded throughout with page after page of long, often multiple-paragraph, quotes from pundits and columnists criticizing or valorizing the Tea Party. These are used as a device to allow the authors to chide liberal critics and praise conservative supporters, thereby establishing their allegiance to the movement. It gets old quickly.

Rasmussen and Schoen are so eager to reinforce every claim about the Tea Party's fearsome potential, and so frequently heedless of how they do so, that they come across as unreliable. One tenet of Tea Party orthodoxy, for instance, is that its membership comprises not only Republicans embarrassed about George W. Bush, but legions of Democrats and independents—an idea the authors push hard, claiming that as many as a third of Tea Party activists were Obama supporters. Elsewhere they appear to claim that a third are liberals. But they also assert that "the Tea Party movement is clearly avowedly conservative."

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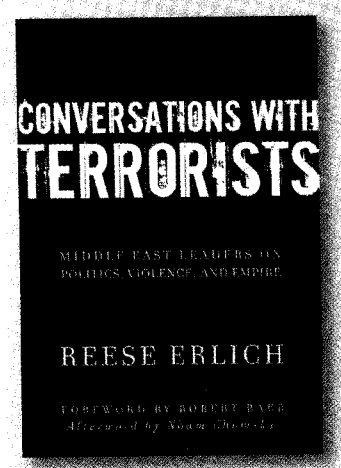

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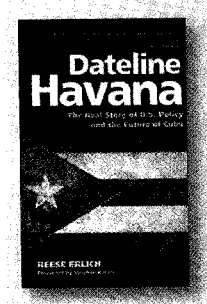

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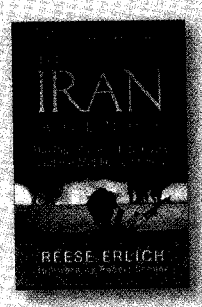

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Another confidence-sapping feature is the body of "proprietary data" billed prominently throughout. Most authors would be more modest than to write, "Needless to say, the qualitative and quantitative data we have gathered is deeply fascinating, highly troubling, and politically portentous." That's setting the bar high. But the data are none of these things. Rasmussen and Schoen place great emphasis on the class divide between political elites and mainstream Americans, which they claim to illuminate with a gimmicky Political Class Index that they have devised to determine who falls into which category. The questions are so mindless that they undermine any faith that the reader may have brought to the project. Sample question: "Do government and big business often work together in ways that hurt consumers and investors?" Answer "yes" and you're in the mainstream, "no" and you've revealed yourself as a member of the political elite. As a Washington reporter, I certainly qualify by Rasmussen and Schoen's standards as a member of the "political elite." But I would answer "yes," since I can think of dozens of examples. Most readers will find themselves constantly thinking, "Wait a minute—*this* is their proprietary research?!"

Occasionally, the authors' claims are defeated within the very same sentence in which they appear. "The roots of the Tea Party can be traced back to the social and economic movements, beginning with Barry Goldwater and spanning the latter half of the 20th century," they write. I'm no scholar, but I'd wager that a movement named for events that took place in 1773, and whose members revel in the costumes and pageantry of the American Revolution, traces its lineage a bit further back than Goldwater.

When we look back at the 2010 elections, I suspect we'll want to know what made the various strands of conservatism converge so suddenly. For all their ungrounded certainty, the authors of *Mad as Hell* don't seem to know a whole lot more than anybody else. But that never stopped anyone from being an expert on cable television. WM

Joshua Green, a contributing editor to the *Washington Monthly,* is a senior editor of the *Atlantic* and a columnist for the *Boston Globe.*

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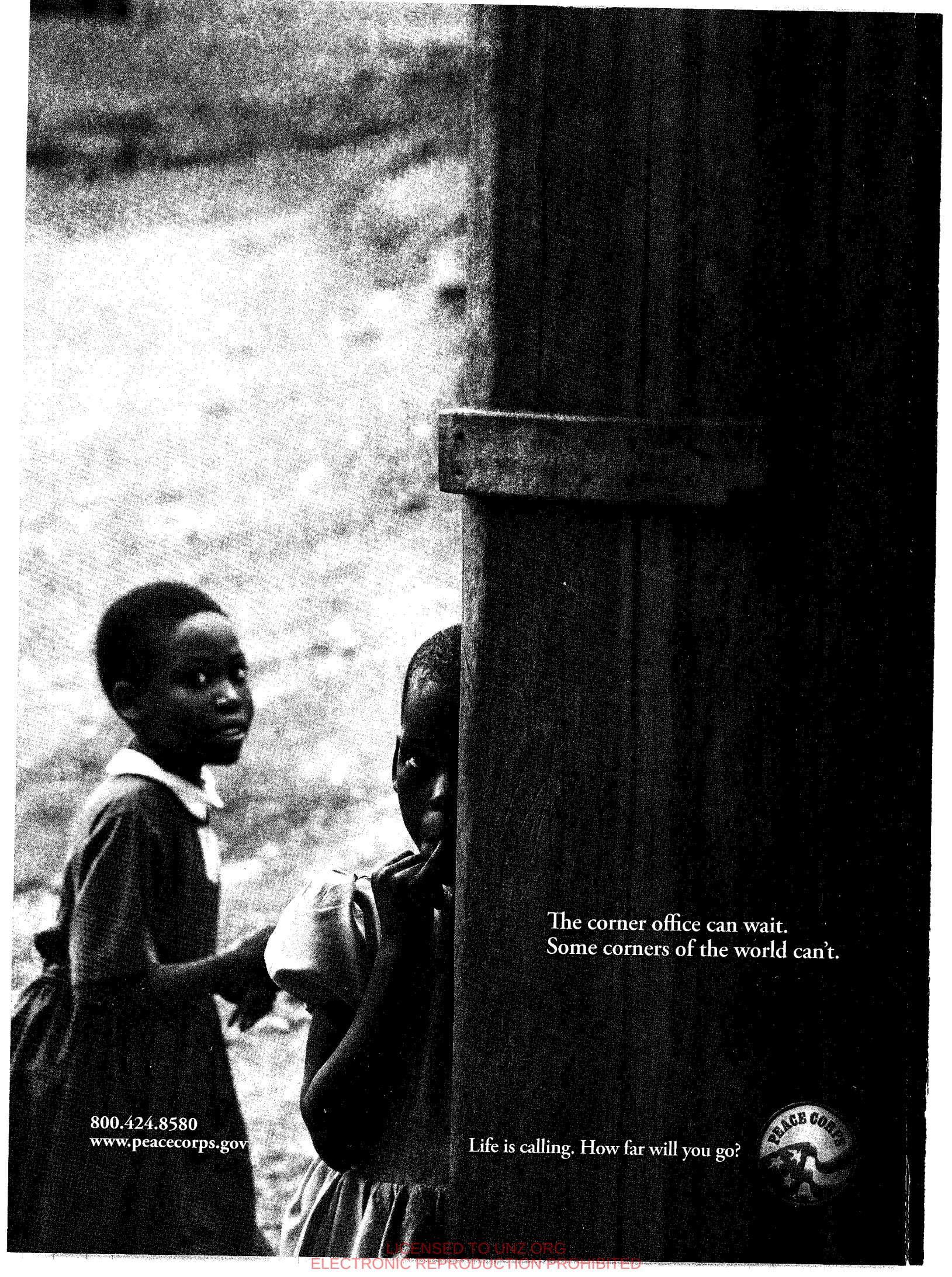

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